WINDOWS 10 SECRET TOOLS

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- ✓ Hidden hacks

...and more! p54

WebUser

Issue 365

25 Feb - 10 Mar 2015

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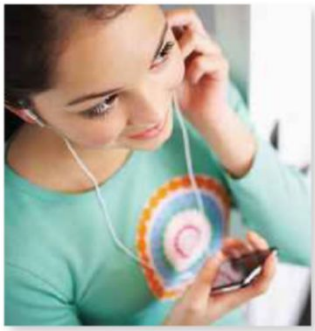

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Homepage

Disguise all your downloads

You can tell a lot about a person from the contents of their Downloads folder. Okay, so mine consists of restaurant menus, programs I've tested for the magazine and an MP3 of the theme tune to *The Littlest Hobo*, but people with more interesting lives and hobbies could potentially give all manner of secrets away.

Keeping what you download private is as much an online right as encrypting your emails and browsing the web incognito, and doesn't imply you have something to hide. In this issue's cover feature (page 38), we explain how to stop people spying on your downloads, both during and after the download process, so you can grab what you like from the web without feeling paranoid or ashamed.

Another download headache is when anti-virus software says a file is infected when you're 99.9 per cent sure it's clean. On page 46, we reveal how to combat the dreaded false positive, so you can download safe files without a fuss.

Robert Irvine
robert_irvine@dennis.co.uk
#webuser

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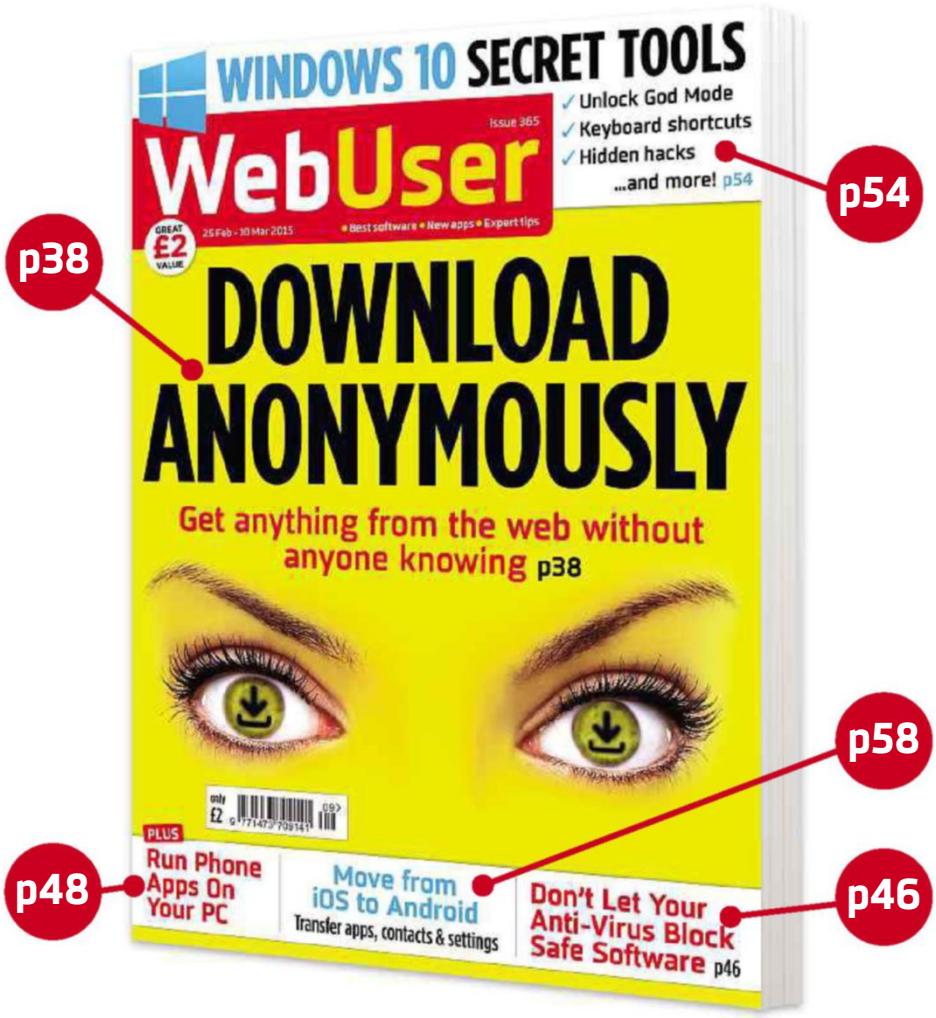

abc Average sales, Jan-Dec 2014, 29,057 copies per issue

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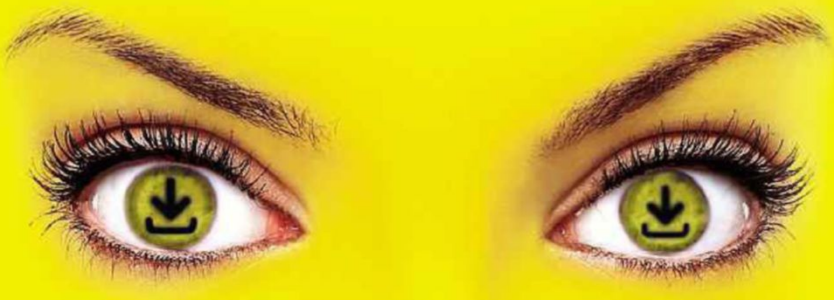

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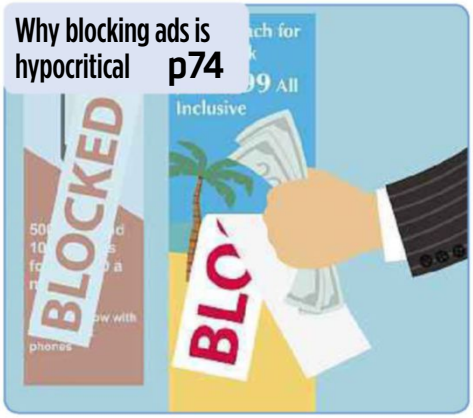

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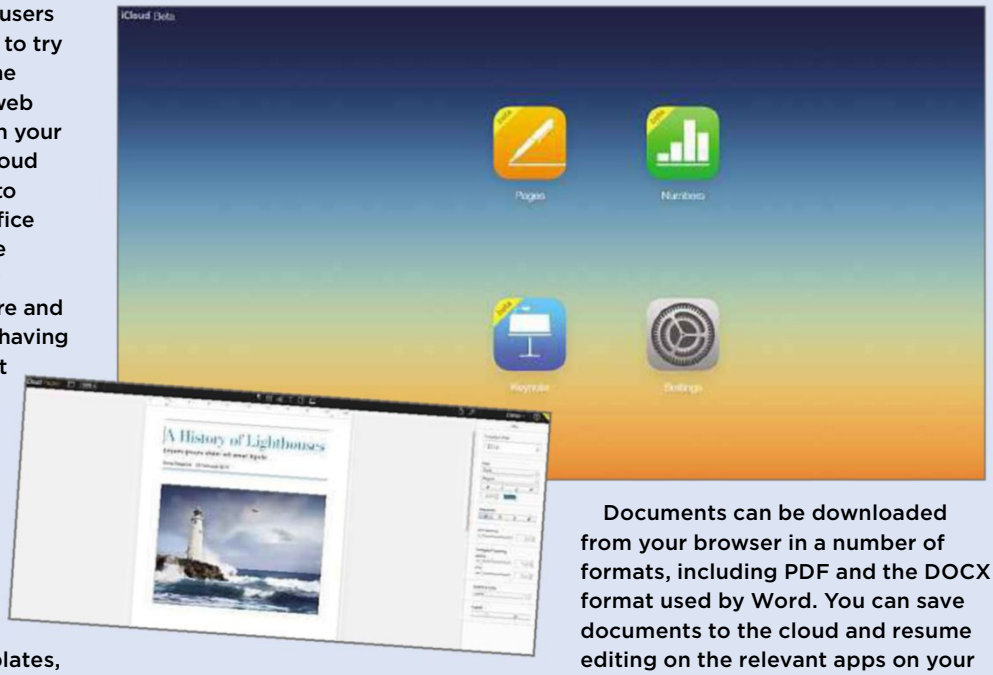
What's New Online

Try Apple's iWork – even if you don't

There's good news for PC users who have always wanted to try some of Apple's tools. The company has made its iWork web apps available for free to use in your browser, as part of the new iCloud beta, providing an alternative to Google Docs and Microsoft Office Online. This means you can use Apple's Pages word processor, Numbers spreadsheets software and Keynote presentation without having to splash out on a Mac. You get 1GB of iCloud storage, too. Just sign in with an existing Apple ID or create a new one for free.

In Pages, you can create newsletters, flyers, CVs and business cards using a range of stylish templates. The Keynote presentation app also has many attractive templates, although you can't add videos to presentations. It's also currently not available in British English, so it flags up "colour" as misspelt.



Documents can be downloaded from your browser in a number of formats, including PDF and the DOCX format used by Word. You can save documents to the cloud and resume editing on the relevant apps on your iPhone or iPad.

beta.icloud.com

Listen to lost *Desert Island Discs* episodes

bit.ly/louis365

Louis Armstrong and Diana Rigg are among the personalities whose appearances on Radio 4's *Desert Island Discs*, thought to be lost forever, have been found and put online. Other rescued episodes feature William Hartnell, the first actor to play Doctor Who, and *Thomas the Tank Engine* author Reverend W Awdry. Click the link above to hear Louis Armstrong's castaway choices, or search for the other guests. All the rescued episodes were broadcast between 1964 and 1970. They've not been heard since.

Watch thousands of archived videos

www.pond5.com/free

This iconic still is taken from George Méliès' much-loved 1902 film *A Trip to the Moon*, clips from which are among thousands you can watch at the Pond5 Public Domain Project. The site is a huge searchable collection of free videos, photos, sound recordings, sound effects and 3D models aimed at "media makers", such as people working on TV shows and websites. But there's nothing to stop you enjoying the content, too.

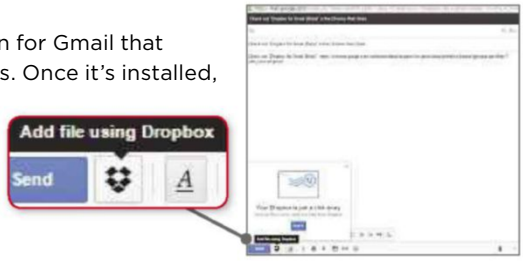
The most interesting items in the collection cover historical events such as NASA rocket launches, footage from World War One and speeches from Winston Churchill and John F Kennedy. Pond5 is a US company, so much of the content is aimed at American audiences, but there's still plenty to keep Brits entertained, including rare videos of King George V and Queen Mary.

We highlight 10 of the most amazing and amusing things you can do on the web this fortnight

Use Dropbox's new Gmail add-on

bit.ly/dropbox365

Dropbox has released a new add-on for Gmail that makes it easier to add and send files. Once it's installed, it places a Dropbox icon at the bottom-left of your Compose Mail box. Click it, sign into your Dropbox account, click the file you want to attach and click the blue 'Insert link' button.



Discover Google's new View-Master

www.view-master.com

Many adults of a certain age will have happy childhood memories of exploring the world's landmarks using Mattel's View-Master, which for years was the closest thing to a virtual-reality headset. Mattel has reinvented the View-Master for the 21st century by building one that works with Google Cardboard (www.google.com/cardboard). It should arrive in the UK early next year so until then, visit the official site for more info and to watch a fun video showing what it can do.

Hear words translated into foreign languages

wordmap.co

If you want to know how to say hello in any language, from Arabic to Zulu, type it into Word Map, then click the relevant link to hear it spoken. The map shows you how words spread around the world, and what languages share the same spelling. Clicking the word in a country tells you more about the language with a link to its Wikipedia page. It works best with simple words, so try 'top' before 'topological'.

Play new levels of 'The Doctor and the Dalek'

bit.ly/who365

The BBC has added four new levels to its online game 'The Doctor and the Dalek', which aims to help teach children coding and programming skills. A tablet version is also now available from the Google Play store (bit.ly/play365), Amazon Appstore (bit.ly/amazon365) and Apple App Store (bit.ly/ios365).

Parents keen to help their children learn should download the teachers' pack: bit.ly/pack365.

5 TO FOLLOW ON TWITTER

@DollyParton
Words of wisdom from the queen of country – essential for followers of 'dollyism'

@HRP_palaces
Details of events from the Historic Royal Palaces charity

@bbcpress
Official account of the BBC press office, linking to statements, programme info and media packs

@librivox
New, free audiobooks available from LibriVox, plus regular 'on this day' facts

@LesDennis
Prolific tweeting from the veteran entertainer, and now *Corrie* star

Use new Office Online tools

bit.ly/officeonline365

Microsoft has updated Office Online with lots of useful features, including the ability to print a PDF from Word Online without having to download it first. There are also new 'Save As' options and improved proofreading tools.

Watch a time-lapse video of the sun

bit.ly/sunvid365

Filmed by NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory and available to watch on YouTube, this time-lapse video captured the Sun one frame every eight hours between June 2010 and February 2015.

Avoid in-app purchases in games

https://itunes.apple.com/gb

You won't find any games with in-app purchases in the new 'Pay Once & Play' category on the Apple App Store.

Need to Know

Freeview to launch free on-demand TV service

What happened?

Freeview is to be radically revamped with a redesigned logo and a new connected TV service that includes catch-up programmes. The new service, called Freeview Play, will work with new TVs and set-top boxes over your existing broadband connection, giving you instant access to catch-up content from BBC iPlayer, ITV Player and 4oD, as well as on-demand programming and live broadcasts.

Freeview Play will let you access catch-up TV directly through the existing Freeview electronic programme guide (EPG), making it easy to switch between the channel you're currently watching and shows you missed when they first aired. You'll be able to scroll backwards through the guide to watch up to seven days' worth of programmes.

Guy North, Freeview's Managing Director, said: "In the same way that we took the UK from analogue to digital, Freeview Play is the next step in that vision and it will put the viewer in control, without complexity, commitment or unnecessary cost – we want to keep television fair and open for everyone."

It's not yet clear what content will be included in Freeview Play, beyond the catch-up services from BBC, ITV and Channel 4, or what on-demand apps might also be offered. Freeview Play will be available later this year, so more details should become available over the next few months.

Freeview's shift to on-demand and catch-up follows the BBC, ITV and Channel 4 pulling their funding from rival service YouView, following the revelation that the vast majority of its users were BT and TalkTalk customers with broadband-and-TV contracts. The high price of YouView set-top boxes has been blamed for the shortfall of casual viewers, with consumers balking at the £300 price tag and only signing up when the cost of the box was subsidised by the two ISPs over the length of the contract. Instead of investing in YouView, the trio of broadcasters sank £100 million into helping Freeview develop an internet-connected version.

How will it affect you?

If you're not already accessing on-demand or catch-up shows via an internet-connected TV, Freeview Play will significantly expand your viewing options. You'll need to upgrade your TV or set-top box, because existing devices won't work with Freeview Play, but there are no subscription costs. Because Freeview is an open system, any manufacturer will be able to include Play in its hardware.

Of course, there are other options if you're not looking to buy a new television. You can connect existing TVs to streaming services via devices such as Amazon Fire TV, Roku and Chromecast, all of which cost much less than a new television.

Choosing the best service depends on what you watch – for example, if you want sport, Sky or YouView with BT Sport may be a better option. However, Freeview Play will provide more choice for catch-up and greater flexibility as to how and when you watch TV.

What do we think?

For many of us, catch-up is now the default way to watch programmes, so it's about time Freeview acknowledged services such as iPlayer. Prices for the new set-top boxes haven't yet been revealed, but we're hoping for less than the £300 charged by YouView, which proved too expensive for many of us. After all, Freeview's original aim was to provide free TV to everyone without forcing us to sign up for specific broadband and TV services.

Pulling together catch-up services and live broadcasts will make television wonderfully simple again. You'll be able to scroll through the standard channel interface to choose what you want to watch without having to flip from your set-top box to your Chromecast or games console. We're ready to applaud any service that makes lounging on the sofa even less hard work.

What we think of this fortnight's top tech stories and rumours

Virgin Media invests £3bn in broadband

What happened?

Virgin Media announced plans to spend £3 billion on expanding its broadband network, saying it will offer cable services to as many as four million more homes. The infrastructure work will take until 2020 to finish.

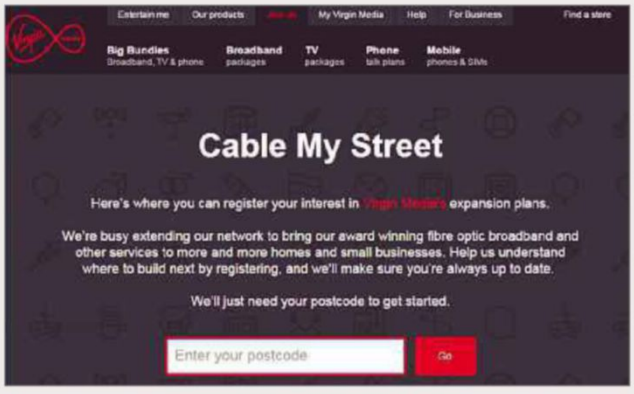
Dubbed Project Lightning, it will extend the reach of Virgin's fibre network to make it more competitive with BT. The company currently offers services to half the UK, and will expand to cover 17 million homes and businesses within the next five years. Virgin is promising speeds of 152Mbps (megabits per second), but said its technology could offer speeds of 10Gbps (gigabits per second) in the future.

How will it affect you?

It's not yet been decided exactly which areas will be covered, but you can help influence that by registering your interest in the superfast service at Virgin's Cable My Street site (keepup.virginmedia.com/cablemystreet). You'll need to provide your contact details as well as entering your postcode, and specify whether you're a residential or business customer. Areas with the most demand will get covered, the company said.

What do we think?

This is great news for UK broadband customers, because more competition with BT should mean faster, cheaper internet. But rather than see Virgin invest in cities and towns that are already well served by broadband, we'd like to see the ISP target the many rural areas that don't yet get good high-speed coverage. Unsurprisingly, the Cable My Street site suggests that consumer demand will dictate where much of Virgin's £3 billion is spent, rather than where need is highest, and that's likely to be areas where BT broadband is already available. If you live in a community with poor broadband, make sure you register your interest as soon as possible and hopefully you'll get some much needed attention from Virgin.



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Facebook introduces new afterlife feature

What happened?

Facebook now lets you give a friend or family member limited control of your account when you die by appointing a 'Legacy Contact'. When Facebook is notified of your death, it will grant account access to that person, who will be able to move your profile to a memorialised Timeline, write a post at the top of the feed, add a new profile picture and approve friend requests. If you'd rather not give posthumous access to your account, you can ask for it to be deleted.

How will it affect you?

So far, the after-death feature is only available in the US, but Facebook said it expects to roll it out to other countries soon. When it reaches the UK, you can set it up by going to Settings, Security and choosing Legacy Contact.

What do we think?

This is a smart move. Facebook's current settings don't make it easy to manage our profiles after death, and handing limited control to a friend who knows you well allows for necessary subtleties. We know we'll be choosing our Legacy Contact carefully.

Samsung slammed for 'listening' smart TVs

What happened?

The terms and conditions for Samsung's smart TVs raised comparisons to the sinister telescreens that kept citizens under constant surveillance in George Orwell's novel *1984*. A sharp-eyed viewer noted the following warning: "Samsung may collect, and your device may capture, voice commands and associated texts so that we can provide you with voice recognition features and evaluate and improve the features. Please be aware that if your spoken words include personal or other sensitive information, that information will be among the data captured and transmitted to a third party."

None of this should come as a surprise considering that voice-recognition technology, as used in these televisions, sends snippets of speech to the cloud to be analysed and processed into text for searches and other commands. In this case, it's widely thought that Samsung TVs send clips of your conversation to speech-recognition firm Nuance.

How will it affect you?

The voice-recognition function is only present on selected Samsung smart TVs and can be deactivated. If you don't want any data sent back to Samsung or its third parties, you can also disconnect your TV from your Wi-Fi, the company said, though it's unclear why you'd buy a smart TV and then not connect it to the internet! Samsung also stressed that the TV is only listening for specific commands or for search queries, and stops recording if it doesn't detect that you're addressing it.

What do we think?

This is a classic case of sacrificing a slice of your privacy for the sake of convenience. What would concern us would be if television manufacturers start selling your data to third parties to, for example, target you with advertising. It's one thing to have your television listen for a command to navigate to the Netflix app, it's another to listen to your conversations to create a profile based on your purchasing potential. Such 'smart' technology needs to be carefully limited, or many of us may prefer to stick to our old 'dumb' TVs.

FIRST LOOK

HP Sprout

sprout.hp.com

This all-in-one PC has been on sale in the US since last November and is finally available in the UK for around £1,899, from stores including John Lewis, PC World and Dixons. That's likely to be far too expensive for most people, but the Sprout justifies its high price with several impressive and innovative features.

The Sprout combines a familiar all-in-one desktop PC with a 'Sprout Illuminator' – a projection-and-capture system that uses a soft, touch-sensitive mat placed directly in front of the Sprout's screen. The Illuminator consists of a depth sensor, a 14.6-megapixel camera, a scanner and a projector that beams a second display directly onto the mat. The projector's resolution is a relatively low 1,024 x 768 pixels, but we love the touch-sensitive mat, which lets two people interact with every finger of each hand, to collaborate on projects and to play games.

The Sprout's outstanding feature is its 3D-scanning. At the touch of a button, the Sprout can scan anything placed on its mat and immediately bring up a virtual version you can manipulate and share. The scanning software usefully removes the background, creating an instant cut-out of the object, although you may need to perform subsequent scans to get a perfect result.

Aside from its flashy features, the Sprout is equipped with an Intel Core i7-4790S processor, 8GB of RAM, 1TB of storage and Nvidia GeForce GT 745A graphics. It uses Windows 8.1 and takes full advantage of its touch optimisation.

The Sprout may prove a worthwhile investment for creative types, although its success will ultimately rest on how successfully software developers produce apps that take advantage of the dual-screens and 3D scanning. Otherwise, it might be the type of computer that's fun to try, but too pricey to buy. Plus it does have a very silly name.

WHAT'S THE RUMOUR

Is Apple planning to launch self-driving cars?

Apple is developing a self-driving car, according to various reports. The *Wall Street Journal* says the company has several hundred engineers currently working on its first car, while other sources claim that Apple has been talking to experts at automotive suppliers about selling its self-driven vehicle.

Rumours about Apple entering the car market have been circulating for over a year, although the same could be said for televisions and Google Glass-style headsets, both of which have failed to come to fruition. However, the independent reports from different news sources suggest there's some truth in this particular rumour.

The reports suggest that Apple is seeking to shake up the car market in the same way it did the smartphone one, delivering a unique product that's unlike anything available today. The Reuters source said Apple wasn't seeking any help from existing car manufacturers. Instead, "Apple is interested in all the potential ways you can evolve the car; that includes autonomous driving," the source said.

Last year, Apple was linked with a possible takeover bid for electronic car manufacturer, Tesla. The car maker's CEO was reported to have met Tim Cook for secret talks, but no deal has been forthcoming. Instead, it seems Apple is going to spend its money on an internal engineering effort to develop the car, but has reportedly lured several Tesla engineers with lucrative pay deals.

LIKELIHOOD RATING

✓✓✓✓✓

Google has been working on a self-driving car for several years, so we wouldn't be surprised if Apple is planning to trump its rival with an autonomous vehicle of its own. Particularly intriguing are the photos of a mysterious van equipped with laser sensors, which were recently posted online as evidence of Apple testing a self-driving vehicle in California.

What's new on Kickstarter

Our favourite new project on the crowd-funding site

ScreenStick

bit.ly/screen365 | From £8

If the screen on your mobile device is always dirty from the constant tapping and swiping involved in playing games, you'll appreciate the ScreenStick. This ultra-sensitive joypad for your iPhone or iPad attaches to your screen via two suction pads, so you can easily control games without needing to touch the screen. The ScreenStick works with simulation and action games, and even comes with a small pouch so you can take it wherever you go. Funding for the project ends on 15 March, with a target of £6,000 and a range of pledge amounts to choose from.

WEBOMETER

WE LIKE...

Thousands of bogus brand sites shut down

UK police say they have closed down 2,000 websites selling fake luxury goods since the start of the year. The sites sold counterfeit products from brands including Burberry and Abercrombie & Fitch.

Free Wi-Fi coming to trains within two years

David Cameron has announced plans to bring free Wi-Fi to trains across the UK by 2017. The government plans to invest £50 million in the programme – hopefully without increasing fares!

WE DON'T LIKE...

Twitter wants more promoted tweets

The CEO of Twitter, Dick Costolo, hopes to increase the social network's ad revenue by making five per cent of each user's feed (that's one in 20 tweets) a sponsored or promoted tweet.

Google 'recording our conversations'

Google has been accused of eavesdropping on users through its Voice Search extension for Chrome. Like Samsung smart TVs (see story on opposite page), the always-on tool uploads recorded sounds.

Stay Safe Online

News about the latest threats and advice from security experts

SECURITY ALERT! | What's been bothering us this fortnight

Scammers use fake AdwCleaner to target PCs

Scammers are using a fake version of AdwCleaner to trick unsuspecting users into paying to remove malware from their PCs, according to howtogeek.com. Individuals who have adware or spyware on their PCs have been directed to a website telling them that they need to download AdwCleaner to remove the malware. However, the link leads to a fake version of AdwCleaner and, after scanning the user's PC, it asks for a payment of $59.99 to remove the detected viruses. The program is normally available for free from bit.ly/adwclean365 and is one of the most powerful malware-removal tools available.

bit.ly/adwcleaner365

Online banking customers targeted by Trojan

More than 30,000 spam emails that attempted to install the banking Trojan Dyreza on users' PCs were sent in one day, according to security firm Bitdefender. The malware, which has been compared to the well-known Trojan Zeus, installs itself on a PC but is only activated when the user enters personal information on a specific website, usually a banking login page.

bit.ly/dyreza365

PATCH TUESDAY: February

February's Patch Tuesday included nine bulletins, three of which were given the highest severity rating of Critical. Bulletin MS15-009, in particular, was a significant update, fixing one publicly disclosed vulnerability in Internet Explorer as well as 40 privately reported flaws related to the browser. The flaw patched by bulletin MS15-011 (also rated Critical) poses a threat to businesses, especially those whose employees work remotely using unsecured wireless networks. Left unpatched, it could allow attackers to take complete control of an affected system by tricking a user into connecting to a malicious domain.

The last of the Critical updates, MS15-010, patched six vulnerabilities in Windows, the most serious of which could allow remote code execution if a user opened a specially crafted file or visited a malicious site containing embedded TrueType fonts. The remaining six bulletins fixed a variety of flaws in Windows, Office and Microsoft Server software.

bit.ly/patchtuesday365

Security Helpdesk | Your questions answered by security specialists

David Emm, Principal Security Researcher at Kaspersky Lab (www.kaspersky.co.uk)

Q I'm prepared to pay for security software but what's the minimum protection I should have? Can I use just anti-virus software?

Samuel Caines, via email

A If by 'anti-virus' software, you mean a product that is largely reliant on signature scanning (which involves analysing a threat, creating a signature for it and adding this to the latest update so that customers are protected), I would caution strongly against relying on the program alone. The volume of threats and the speed at which they spread across the web makes it essential to use a comprehensive internet security product that employs proactive technologies to block threats, and manages to stop even those threats that are new and haven't been seen before. Most of the latest anti-virus software works in this way, and – despite the name - protects you against a lot more than just viruses.

Q How safe is it to connect my iPad to a public Wi-Fi network?

Robert Harwood, via email

A That depends on what you want to do on your iPad when you're connected to the Wi-Fi. The public Wi-Fi networks that you find in coffee shops, airports, railway stations and so on are open to everyone, which means they can be accessed by hackers who are hoping to harvest users' sensitive information. If you're connected to an open, unsecured Wi-Fi network, it's very easy for them to do this and unlikely that they'll be detected. The hackers can also set up their own fake Wi-Fi hotspot in the hope that people will connect to it, believing that it's a legitimate network. So it's best to avoid using public Wi-Fi for any sensitive transactions, such as online banking and shopping, and for private communication, or you risk having your details stolen. For less risky activities, such as checking the weather or transport times, you should be fine.

Email us your security questions at webuser@dennis.co.uk

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Best New Websites

Site of the Fortnight

AGGREGATOR

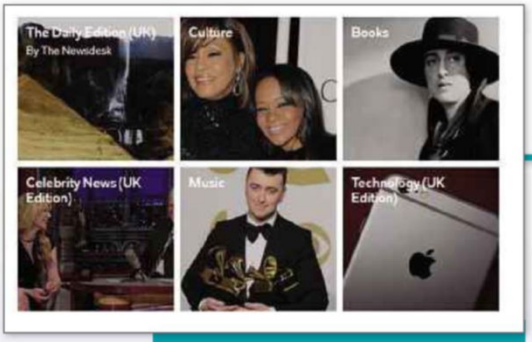
RELAUNCH

Flipboard

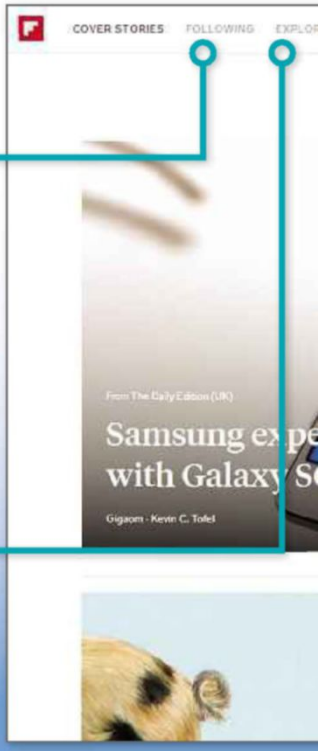
flipboard.com

The popular mobile app for creating your own magazine has now launched on the web. Sign up and choose the topics that interest you, and Flipboard will compile relevant content from categories including Entertainment, Technology, Health, Books and News. We love the site's clean, attractive presentation, which lets you scroll through a mix of articles from your chosen topics, and makes excellent use of large photos for a glossy magazine feel. You can 'like' items to view more of the same in future, share them on social media and add them to your magazine. Constantly updated, it's a great way to digest the latest online content.

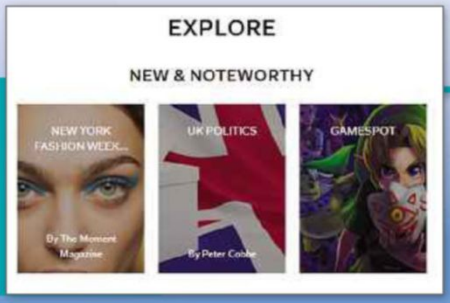
Our rating ★★★★★



FOLLOWING
Here you can 'unfollow' topics that no longer interest you



EXPLORE
Discover interesting content about specific subjects



NEW

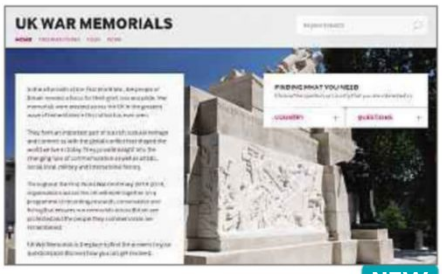
GLASSES

My Glasses Club

www.myglassesclub.co.uk

Avoid the high prices and long waiting times of high-street opticians by joining My Glasses Club, which offers an innovative way to try and buy specs. Sign up to a membership plan (starting at 99p per month plus a £30 joining fee) and choose a new pair of prescription glasses or sunglasses every six months with free 'reglazes' if you damage your lenses. You can browse frames by brand, shape, colour, material and style; try up to four pairs at home before you buy; and get your glasses in five days – all you need is your prescription. The site is a pleasure to use and its smart, simple design includes fun touches, such as using fruit to represent each membership plan.

Our rating ★★★★★



NEW

HERITAGE

UK War Memorials

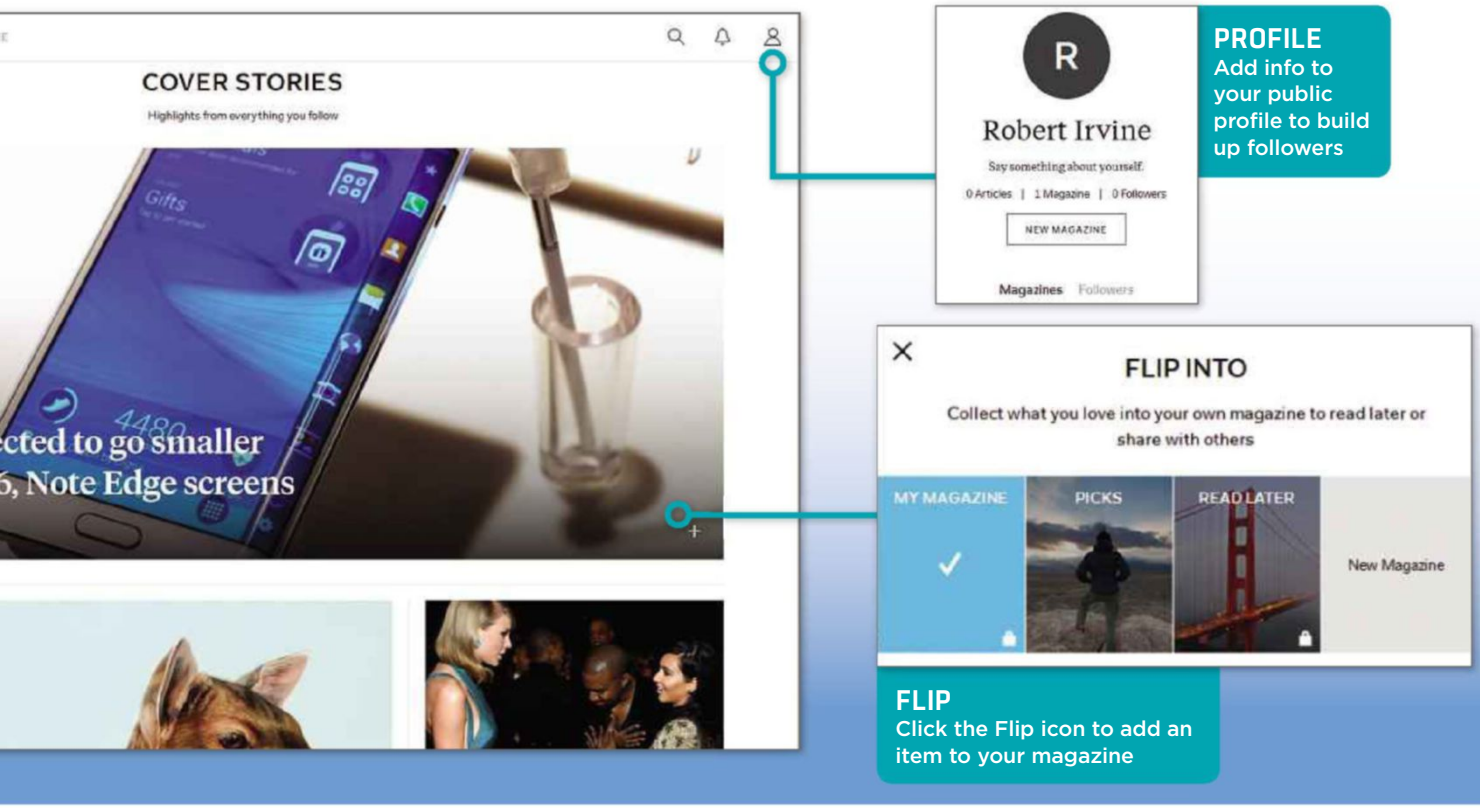
ukwarmemorials.org

Funded by the Department of Culture, Media & Sport, this site aims to be a central hub of information about war memorials around the UK. It's currently in its early stages and will take up to four years to complete, ultimately providing a searchable database of memorials you can use to look up details such as listed status, condition and inscribed names. You can browse the FAQs to learn why war memorials are important, who they commemorate, how to get involved in recording them, and find out which organisations look after them. We look forward to seeing how the site develops.

Our rating ★★★☆☆

Reviews by Robert Irvine

We review this fortnight's best new and relaunched websites and rate them for content, design and features



NEW

ENVIRONMENT

Climate Just

www.climatejust.org.uk

This site uses detailed maps to highlight the people and places in the UK who are likely to be most affected by extreme weather, such as flooding and heatwaves. Click the 'Map tool' link on the homepage, then click Maps and tick the boxes to apply layers of information, including flood disadvantage, heat exposure and fuel poverty. Climate Just focuses on the social effects of climate change, and the ways it can increase inequality and disadvantage, providing case studies and links to relevant resources. It's rather dry and academic in tone, but the maps present a wealth of eye-opening data.

Our rating ★★★☆☆

NEW

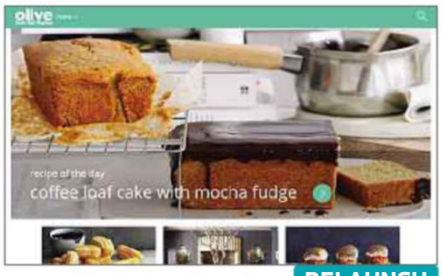
CRIME

HMRC Digital Pilots

hmrcdigitalpilots.com

If you haven't paid your tax bill, you could end up on this site from HM Revenue & Customs, which pinpoints convicted tax dodgers on a map of the UK. Click a marker to view details of a case, such as a money-laundering scam in Stafford involving 23 people and £6m, and find out who in your area has been cheating the taxman. Though defendants aren't 'named and shamed', the site's Most Wanted section includes information and photos for tax evaders who have skipped bail. More practically, it provides links to Gov.uk resources to ensure you follow correct tax procedure.

Our rating ★★★☆☆



RELAUNCH

FOOD

Olive

www.olivemagazine.com

The revamped website for the upmarket food magazine has a stylish new design that's perfect if you like to use a tablet while cooking. Its large, sumptuous photos and streamlined layout make it easy to browse recipes such as 'squash, sage and pecorino gnocchi'; watch how-to videos about, for example, peeling ginger; and read the magazine's food and drink guides. Olive is keen to show off its social-media credentials, integrating images from its Instagram and Pinterest feeds, but there's no user interaction on the site itself – maybe because it would look too messy.

Our rating ★★★★☆

Tell us about your website via webuser@dennis.co.uk

NEW

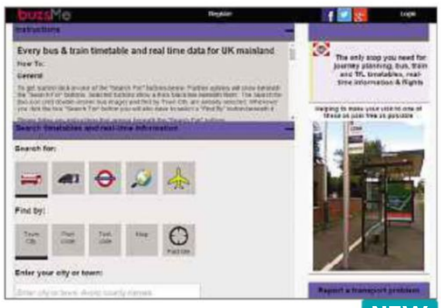
FILM

Jurassic World

uk.jurassicworldintl.com

Although we're not especially excited about the release of yet another *Jurassic Park* film in June, this promotional website is more cleverly done than most. Rather than simply sticking up a trailer and some movie stills, it pretends to be the site for a real dinosaur theme park, with details of attractions, waiting times, a park map and the chance to explore by dinosaur. These range from the spiky Ankylosaurus to the 28-metre long Apatosaurus, one of the largest animals to ever walk the Earth. On the downside, some areas were locked when we visited including the Park Cam, which promises live streaming of dinosaur enclosures.

Our rating ★★★☆☆



NEW

TRANSPORT

BuzsMe

buzs.me

BuzsMe isn't likely to win any prizes for design, but it's a brilliant tool for planning journeys around the UK on public transport. There are timetables and live departure data for buses, trains, planes and the London Underground, so you can choose your best option. Select a mode of transport and enter your information, such as your nearest train station, and BuzsMe provides details of disruptions and engineering works so you don't end up with any unforseen delays. Our favourite feature is the Journey Planner, which tells you the best ways to reach your destination using different modes of transport.

Our rating ★★★★☆

NEW

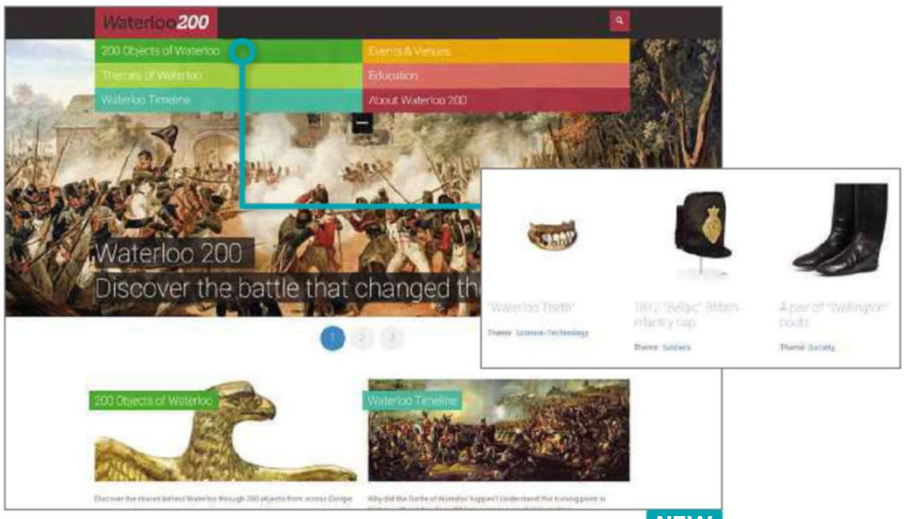
NEWS

NewsJumble

newsjumble.org

If you often visit a host of different news websites to check the latest headlines, NewsJumble could save you a lot of time and clicking. It aggregates stories and videos from various online sources including BBC News, The Guardian and BuzzFeed, so you can click straight through to them without first visiting the sites. Despite its name, NewsJumble is actually very tidy, with content organised into four clear categories and arranged by news provider. It would be even neater if the articles and videos from each site were combined into single sections, but we like the idea and the eclectic selection of sources.

Our rating ★★★☆☆



NEW

HISTORY

Waterloo 200

www.nam.ac.uk/waterloo200

To celebrate the 200-year anniversary of Waterloo when "Napoleon did surrender", this site has selected 200 historical objects from museums and private collections across Europe to tell the story of the battle. These include weapons, musical instruments, the artificial leg of the Duke of Uxbridge and – our favourite – a pair of original 'Wellington' boots. The site is easy to browse and provides a Waterloo timeline and articles about its legacy, along with information about the dozens of bicentenary events, including a 200-mile bike ride from Belgium to London. Be sure to read about 'Waterloo teeth', looted from the mouths of dead soldiers and sold to dentists.

Our rating ★★★★☆

NEW

CREATIVE

Faber Academy

www.faberacademy.co.uk

Budding writers can use Faber Academy's informative and attractive relaunched website to get closer to their dream of being published. Set up by publisher Faber & Faber, the Academy offers courses online and at its London headquarters, with the latter including 'Writing a Novel: the first 15,000'. You can book your place through the site and read full programmes for all the courses, which last from one day to six months. There's also information about the tutors, most of whom are professional writers, and a weekly competition in which you can win books for writing 250 words of fiction.

Our rating ★★★☆☆

ALSO NEW

HISTORY

The Card Index

www.thecardindex.com

★★★★☆

Postcard collector Giles Cookson has launched this site to showcase his collection of more than 2,000 cards of York and its surrounding villages from the 1890s to the 1940s. They provide a fascinating glimpse at buildings, streets and landscapes, and include some intriguing written messages. Postcards of other areas in the UK will be added soon.

CRIME

Track My Crime

trackmycrime.police.uk

★★★☆☆

Victims of crime can use this new government website to follow their case online. Enter your surname, date of birth and crime reference number to contact officers and get the latest developments. The site currently only covers three police forces - Avon and Somerset, Kent and South Yorkshire - but will soon be rolled out across England and Wales.

MEDICAL

Barts Pathology Museum

www.qmul.ac.uk/bartspathology

★★★☆☆

Use this revamped site to take a peek inside the medical museum that showcases such curios as the bound foot of a Chinese woman and the skull of John Bellingham, who assassinated Prime Minister Spencer Percival in 1812. *Sherlock* fans may know the museum's roof from the second series, when the sleuth apparently leapt to his death.

CYCLING

Walkers Cycling

www.walkerscycling.co.uk

★★★☆☆

The relaunched bike shop has improved its dated old design, making it easier to browse the wide range of cycling products, from new and reconditioned bikes to clothing, wheels, and parts and accessories. There are still some empty sections and design quirks, and customer reviews would be useful, but it's heading in the right direction.

WEBSITE SECRETS

Discover Google Play's secret search

Google Play (play.google.com) has come a long way since it was called Android Market, and along with films, TV shows, music, books and devices, it also has a curious Easter Egg. If you click the Search button at the top of the page without entering a search query, Play displays results for the word 'unicorns'. These may include the game Pink Fluffy Unicorn Dash, the film *The Adventures of Tintin: the Secret of the Unicorn* and the early T Rex album *Unicorn*. Why unicorns? Because by leaving the search box blank, you're looking for something that doesn't exist.

WebUser Back Issues

Issue 364
11 - 24 February 2015

Issue 363
28 Jan - 10 Feb 2015

Issue 362
14 - 27 January 2015

Issue 361
31 Dec 2014 - 13 Jan 2015

Issue 360
17 - 30 December 2014

Issue 359
3 - 16 December 2014

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Build a Better Site

Specialist tips, top tools and practical help

Top Tips of the Fortnight

Create sophisticated background patterns

A website with a plain background looks boring but using a photo can make it slow to load. A good compromise is to create a pattern with just a few lines of code that adds interest but uses minimal resources. Patternizer (patternizer.com) lets you play with lines and colours to create endless interesting patterns, simply by manipulating sliders and colour pickers. If you're not very creative, click the Featured Patterns link for inspiration. You can select patterns and adapt them for yourself.

Check your responsive design

The best websites rearrange their content to fit smaller screens when they're displayed on phones and tablets. You can experiment with this simply by dragging the

right-hand edge of your browser inward to narrow the display area and seeing what happens to your site. If you want to test it with a selection of small-format sizes at once, visit bit.ly/resp365 and enter a website in the bar at the top to display it in a selection of different-sized windows.

Deal of the Fortnight

Get 50 per cent off a year of 123-reg's Website Builder (bit.ly/web365) if you buy a year in advance. Pay £5.99 per month instead of £11.99 for the Basic package.

Web-building Helpdesk

THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT:
Ervin Domonkos, Technical Manager, Wholegrain Digital (www.wholegraindigital.com)

Q Could I host a private WordPress website on my own network? How?

Simon Goldacre, via email

A First, you have to install a web server on the computer you're going to use as a server. XAMPP (www.apachefriends.org) is a good option that's available for all popular operating systems. Follow the web server's tutorials: you'll have to copy your files to a special folder (htdocs) and install your database on the MySQL server that comes with XAMPP. Because you'll be using WordPress on a local network, you'll have to set the home URL and the site URL to your server's IP address and the path inside your htdocs folder (such as http://192.168.1.10/mywp). If you get stuck, find a networking expert to help you.

MINI WORKSHOP | Build photo galleries for your website

Arclab Thumb Studio: bit.ly/arclab365 | 10 mins | XP, Vista, 7, 8+

Sharing photos on social media only works if your friends and family are on it, too. Arclab Thumb Studio creates photo galleries for your website, so anyone can see your photos, even if they aren't on Facebook.

1 Click New Project 1 and choose from the list of templates. 2 Pick one to see it previewed on the right. 3 Click Next. 4 The software creates all the versions of the image files it needs, but you can tweak the settings to change the size of each of the image types and alter the JPEG-quality setting.

2 On the Project Settings tab, you can change the colours, 1 the size of the tables 2 and the number of rows and columns, 3 though not all options are available on all templates. The 'Image and Album Selection' tab 4 lets you add individual images or a folder of pictures. It might take a while to convert all the images if you have a lot of them.

3 You can move pictures up or down the order 1 and rotate any that are wrongly oriented. 2 Some templates also let you create albums (folders). 3 The Create tab 4 lets you choose a folder to store the files in, while the Output tab 5 lets you upload your pages and pictures, or saves them locally so you can preview them.

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Group Test

We test and compare the latest products

Superfast SSDs

Installing an SSD will boost the performance of your PC. **Andy Shaw** tests six fast and affordable options

Installing an SSD (solid-state drive) as the primary drive in your PC is a sure-fire way to boost its performance. Unlike the spinning magnetic disks in mechanical hard drives, SSDs use memory that's more like your PC's superfast RAM (Random Access Memory).

If you want to use an SSD in a laptop, you may have to replace your existing drive. If you're upgrading a desktop PC, there should be enough room to run your SSD as your primary drive, with Windows and your most demanding programs on it, while your old hard drive stores everything else. Simply slot the SSD into one of the spaces where you would normally plug in a standard hard drive. See our guide to installing an SSD in Issue 345's Weekend Project (bit.ly/webuser345).

HOW WE TESTED

We tested the drives using transfer-speed tests and PC benchmarks. AS SSD Benchmark (bit.ly/asbench365) tests how fast each drive can transfer files, measured in MB/s (megabytes per second) both from the drive (read test) and to it (write test). The sequential test has all the parts of the test file stored in consecutive memory, so the drive isn't being slowed by having to search for the data or find a place to store it. We also used Futuremark's PCMark 8 (bit.ly/pcmark365) – a storage benchmark that tests how well each drive can run Windows programs.

Samsung 850 Pro 256GB | £136.03 | www.kikatek.com

The 850 Pro is at the top of Samsung's SSD range. It uses a new technology developed by Samsung called 3D V-NAND, which arranges the SSD's memory components in three-dimensional layers, rather than the two-dimensional strings found in other manufacturers' drives. In a nutshell, this means the memory units can be larger, which makes them more efficient to run and longer lasting (Samsung's offering an unprecedented 10-year warranty). Bigger also means slower, but this is compensated for by the inter-connected layers. As a result, the drive performed extremely well. In the AS SSD Benchmark test, it achieved a sequential read speed of 527MB/s and a write speed of 502MB/s, which were the fastest. It also performed well in our PCMark 8 test, scoring 4,984 – only seven points behind the fastest (the Fujifilm HQ-PC 256GB).

VERDICT ★★★★★

The Samsung 850 Pro is crammed with new technololgy, which provides two main benefits: it's both faster and more durable than all the other SSDs we tested in this group. It's also the most expensive drive, but if it lasts more than twice as long, then it's well worth it.

Crucial MX100 256GB | £79.99 | www.dabs.com

Crucial's £80 drive works out to 31p per GB, which makes it the cheapest SSD in this test. The low price hasn't stopped it from using innovative technology, and its memory uses the smallest components of all the SSDs we tested. This doesn't make the unit itself any smaller, because it still comes in a standard 2.5in hard-drive case, but it should make the drive faster.

In our tests, we found the MX100 was fast when reading files but fell behind when writing them. In our AS SSD sequential-read test, its speed was 519MB/s, which is the second fastest in this group. In the accompanying write test, however, it only worked at 332MB/s, which was the slowest. It was fourth in the PCMark 8 test with a score of 4,966. While the drive is cheap and will certainly boot your PC quickly with its fast read speeds, the Samsung 850 Pro is a better all-rounder.

VERDICT ★★★★☆

For a long time, SSDs were an expensive option. This drive from Crucial bucks that trend by providing a great-value device that works out as our cheapest per-GB option. Its more expensive rivals are faster, but it's an excellent budget choice.

Samsung 850 Evo 250GB | £99.49 | www.cclonline.com

The 850 Evo is Samsung's newest SSD. It's cheaper than the Gold Award-winning 850 Pro, but uses the same cutting-edge 3D V-NAND technology. However, where the Pro uses MLC memory, the Evo – like the SanDisk Ultra II (see review, right) – uses TLC. This means that it stores more information in each memory cell, which increases the density of storage. This in turn decreases performance and life-span, although Samsung has still given this model a generous five-year warranty.

The Evo's performance doesn't keep up with the 850 Pro's speed when reading and writing raw files. In our AS SSD tests, its sequential read speed was 510MB/s, which puts it in fourth place. The sequential write speed was slightly better, at 499MB/s (second place). However, it performed impressively in the PCMark 8 benchmark, where it registered a score of 4,984, placing it joint second with the 850 Pro.

VERDICT ★★★★☆

If you want good performance for less than £100, the 850 Evo is an excellent choice. It's faster than the budget Crucial and SanDisk models, and has a better warranty. It even keeps up with the 850 Pro in places, though it doesn't have the same underlying performance or longevity.

SanDisk Ultra II 240GB | £79.99 | www.pcworld.co.uk

The SanDisk Ultra II SSD works out to just 33p per GB, making it the second cheapest SSD in the group. One of the ways SanDisk has managed to keep its costs down is by using TLC NAND technology, which allows each memory storage cell to hold three times more data than standard NAND memory. The downside to TLC NAND is that individual memory cells have to be accessed more frequently because they hold more information, which means they can wear out more quickly. This in turn reduces the potential lifespan of the drive (hence the three-year warranty, which is one of the shortest in this group). They also work a little slower.

The Ultra II's performance didn't match its more expensive rivals, with an AS SSD sequential read speed of 505MB/s (second from last) and a sequential write speed of 473 (also second from last). It was second from last in the PCMark 8 benchmark test, too, where it scored 4,925.

VERDICT ★★★★☆

It was a close run thing between the SanDisk and Crucial SSDs. Though they cost the same, the Ultra II's capacity is slightly smaller. It has a much better write speed than Crucial's model, but this wasn't enough to achieve a better score in the PCMark 8 test.

AMD Radeon R7 SSD 240GB | £108.51 | www.dabs.com

This drive bears the AMD logo but it's made by OCZ, an SSD manufacturer that's owned by Toshiba.

The R7's AS SSD sequential read score was the worst in this group at 493MB/s. Its performance improved in the write tests, with the sequential write speed clocking in at 497MB/s, but this inconsistency doesn't do it any favours. The overall impact this has on a PC was demonstrated in its PCMark benchmark score of 4,937, which was the slowest in this group.

The biggest drawback to the R7 is its price. We found it for £108.51 at Dabs (www.dabs.com) which works out to 45p per GB. That's more expensive per-GB than any other SSD in this test, bar the Gold Award-winning Samsung 850 Pro 256GB. Coupled with its poor performance, this makes for a disappointing SSD overall.

VERDICT ★★★☆☆

With poor performance scores and a price that breaks the £100 barrier, the AMD Radeon R7 simply isn't worth the money. Go to Samsung for better performance or, if you want a better deal, Crucial or SanDisk offer greater value for money.

Fujifilm HQ-PC 256GB | £107.78 | www.ballicom.co.uk

Fujifilm is a name you're more likely to associate with digital cameras than solid-state drives, although this drive is actually made by Toshiba.

The HQ-PC sat around the middle of the group in most of our AS SSD tests, though it had a better sequential-read result (third place with 518MB/s) than its write result (fourth place with 489MB/s). The device put in its best performance in tests that simulate how drives might be used in real life, and it got the best score of all the SSDs in our PCMark 8 test, with a benchmark score of 4,991. While all this is impressive, the SSD doesn't come cheap. Granted, the Gold Award-winning Samsung 850 Pro 256GB is more expensive – but it performed more consistently across our tests, was faster than this drive in both our AS SSD read and write tests and comes very close to the Fujifilm SSD's performance in PCMark 8.

VERDICT ★★★☆☆

The Fujifilm HQ-PC got top marks in our PCMark 8 benchmark test but it was neck and neck with both Samsung drives and its price sits between the two. We would recommend spending more and buying the Samsung 850 Pro to maximise the performance you get from your drive.

	Samsung 850 Pro 256GB	Crucial MX100 256GB	Samsung 850 Evo 250GB	SanDisk Ultra II 240GB	AMD Radeon R7 SSD 240GB	Fujifilm HQ-PC 256GB
WEBSITE	www.samsung.com	uk.crucial.com	www.samsung.com	www.sandisk.co.uk	www.amd.com	www.fujifilm.eu
PRICE	£136.03	£79.99	£99.49	£79.99	£108.51	£107.78
BUY FROM	www.kikatek.com	www.dabs.com	www.cclonline.com	www.pcworld.co.uk	www.dabs.com	www.ballicom.co.uk
CAPACITY	256GB (also available in 128GB, 512GB & 1TB)	256GB (also available in 128GB & 512GB)	250GB (also available in 120GB, 500GB & 1TB)	240GB (also available in 120GB, 480GB & 960GB)	240GB (also available in 120GB & 480GB)	256GB (also available in 128GB & 512GB)
PRICE PER GB	53p	31p	40p	33p	45p	42p
INTERFACE	SATA III	SATA III	SATA III	SATA III	SATA III	SATA III
FORM FACTOR	2.5in	2.5in	2.5in	2.5in	2.5in	2.5in
SIZE	100 x 70 x 7mm	100 x 70 x 7mm	100 x 70 x 7mm	100 x 70 x 7mm	100 x 70 x 7mm	100 x 70 x 7mm
WEIGHT	66g	100g	66g	69g	115g	100g
WARRANTY	10 years	3 years	5 years	3 years	4 years	3 years

OUR VERDICT

If you want to get the best performance from your PC, install our Gold Award-winning Samsung 850 Pro. It's a great all-rounder, with superb performance in all our tests, and it comes with an amazing 10-year warranty, which is almost twice as long as the best of the rest.

If you don't want to spend nearly as much on an SSD, it's a close call between the Silver Award-winning Crucial MX100 and the third-place Samsung 850 Evo. The Crucial drive comes out just ahead of the Evo in our opinion, because it offers better value for money. However, the Evo is a faster SSD and provides a very good balance between price and performance.

Web User's Best Buys

Web User and its sister titles test over 2,500 products every year

HARDWARE

SSD

Samsung 850 Pro 256GB

£136.03 from www.kikatek.com
Date tested: February 2015

The Samsung 850 Pro is crammed with new technololgy that makes it faster and more durable than its competitors. You could buy a similarly sized SSD for much less, but in our tests the cheaper models weren't as fast and they don't come with the 850 Pro's generous 10-year warranty.

KEY SPECS
256GB (also available in 128GB, 512GB & 1TB) ■ 53p per GB ■ SATA III interface ■ 2.5in drive case ■ 10 years warranty ■ 100 x 70 x 7mm ■ 66g

TABLET

Google Nexus 9

£319 from play.google.com
Date tested: February 2015

The Nexus 9 is our favourite Android tablet. It has a fantastic screen, even better than the iPad Air 2's, and superb battery life, lasting over 15 hours in our tests. It's cheaper than the latest iPad and comes in 16GB and 32GB capacities.

KEY SPECS
8.9in screen ■ 2,048 x 1,536 pixels resolution ■ Dual-core 2.3GHz 64-bit Nvidia Tegra K1 Denver processor ■ 16/32GB storage ■ 4G option costs £60 extra (32GB models only) ■ Android 5.0 ■ 154 x 228 x 8mm ■ 425g

WINDOWS 8.1 LAPTOP

Asus Transformer Book Flip TP300LA

£449.95 from www.johnlewis.com
Date tested: January 2015

This touchscreen laptop folds over into a chunky tablet. It's well built, did well in our performance tests and has a fantastic battery life.

KEY SPECS
Dual-core 1.9GHz Intel Core i3-4030U processor ■ 4GB of memory ■ 13.3in touchscreen ■ 1,366 x 768 pixels resolution ■ 500GB hard drive ■ 802.11ac Wi-Fi ■ 326 x 232 x 22mm ■ 1.75kg ■ One-year collect-and-return warranty

WIRELESS ROUTER

D-Link DIR-868L

£65.97 from www.dabs.com
Date tested: December 2014

If you're willing to switch your wireless devices to the 5GHz network, the D-Link DIR-868L offers fast and reliable performance at a great price.

KEY SPECS
Dual-band 2.4GHz and 5GHz ■ 802.11b/g/n ■ 1,300Mbps theoretical maximum speed ■ Six internal antennas ■ 4 x 10/100/1000Mbps Ethernet ports ■ WPA and WPA2 encryption ■ 1 x USB 3 port ■ 217 x 123 x 102mm ■ One-year return-to-base warranty

DESKTOP PC

Chillblast Fusion Obelisk

£699.98 from www.chillblast.com
Date tested: November 2014

This great all-round desktop PC achieved a good overall performance in both our Windows and gaming tests. It runs quietly, has a good-quality monitor and is packed with great components, including a fast SSD and a generous hard drive.

KEY SPECS
Quad-core 4.2GHz Intel Core i5-4690K processor (overclocked) ■ 8GB of memory ■ 5 x USB3, 5 x USB2 ports ■ Gigabit Ethernet ■ 120GB SSD ■ 1TB hard drive ■ 1,920 x 1,080 pixels resolution ■ Windows 8.1 ■ 465 x 430 x 192mm

KEYBOARD

Cherry MX-Board 3.0

£55 from www.kikatek.com
Date tested: November 2014

The Cherry MX-Board 3.0 is a hard-wearing mechanical keyboard that's a pleasure to type on. It doesn't have lots of features, but it's ideal if you're looking for a standard, good-quality keyboard.

KEY SPECS
104 keys ■ 1 X USB port ■ 1.8m detachable cable ■ 2 non-slip surfaces ■ 2 rubber caps for adjustable feet ■ 44.6 x 15.8 x 2.8cm ■ 0.83kg ■ Win-Key lock

All prices correct at time of review

BUDGET LAPTOP

Asus X200MA

£175.55 from www.amazon.co.uk
Date tested: October 2014

This is a compact, portable laptop at a great price that will manage the latest version of Windows and provide more than four hours of battery life.

KEY SPECS

2.16GHz Intel Celeron N2830 dual-core processor ■ 500GB hard drive ■ 2GB memory ■ 11.6in (non-touch) screen ■ 1,366 x 768 pixels resolution ■ 1 x USB 3 port, 2 x USB 2 ports ■ 1 x 10/100 Ethernet, 802.11n dual-band Wi-Fi ■ 302 x 200 x 26mm ■ 1.2kg ■ One-year return-to-base warranty

NAS DRIVE

Asustor AS-202TE

£199.66 from www.scan.co.uk
Date tested: September 2014

This NAS drive put in an excellent performance in our tests, transferring files over our network faster than any of the other devices we tested. It has an impressive range of tools, including an HDMI output for streaming to TV.

KEY SPECS

EXT4 file system ■ SATA3 hard drive ■ 2 x 3.5in bays ■ 1 x 10/100/1,000 Ethernet ■ 2 x USB 2 ports, 2 x USB 3 ports ■ 1 x HDMI (1.4a) ■ 1 x 3.5mm mini-jack ■ 230 x 164 x 108mm ■ 1.87kg ■ Two-year return-to-base warranty

WQHD MONITOR

AOC q2770Pqu

£367.96 from www.dabs.com
Date tested: August 2014

The AOC q2770Pqu has an exceptional, high-quality screen and is very reasonably priced. Its settings are preconfigured, so you don't need to tweak them to improve the display, and it has all the ports you'll ever need.

KEY SPECS

27in widescreen ■ 2,560 x 1,440 pixels resolution ■ Portrait mode ■ Adjustable stand ■ 2 x 2W speakers ■ DisplayPort, DVI, HDMI, VGA, 2 x USB 3.0 and 2 x USB 2.0 ports ■ 642 x 428 x 245mm ■ 8kg ■ Three-years return-to-base warranty

HD MONITOR

BenQ EW2740L

£194 from www.ebuyer.com
Date tested: July 2014

The BenQ EW2740L is an excellent-value 27in monitor with good image quality. It supports MHL, so you can connect a compatible mobile device to it, and has two HDMI ports and one VGA port.

KEY SPECS

27in widescreen ■ 1,920 x 1,080 pixels resolution ■ 2W stereo speakers ■ MHL support ■ 2 x HDMI and 1 x VGA ports ■ 320 x 115 x 95mm ■ One-year return-to-base warranty

CHROMEBOOK

Acer C720P Chromebook

£244.81 from www.ilgs.net
Date tested: June 2014

This fantastic Chromebook provides excellent overall performance, respectable battery life and a good collection of ports. It's got a smart touchscreen, comfy keyboard and touchpad, and starts up in no time at all.

KEY SPECS

1.4GHz Intel Celeron 2955U processor ■ 16GB storage ■ 2GB memory ■ 11.6in screen ■ 1,366 x 768 pixels resolution ■ 7.5 hours battery life ■ USB 3, USB 2 and HDMI ports ■ 288 x 204 x 20mm ■ 1.35kg

BUDGET SMARTPHONE

Motorola Moto G

£99.99 (PAYG) from www.argos.co.uk
Date tested: April 2014

The excellent Moto G has set a new standard in affordable smartphones. A 4G model is now available, as well as an updated version with a 5in screen and a microSD card slot to expand its storage. The phone's beautiful screen and good performance make it fantastic value for money.

KEY SPECS

1.2GHz quad-core processor ■ 8GB storage ■ 1,280 x 720 pixels resolution ■ 4.5in screen ■ 1GB memory ■ Android 4.4 (KitKat) ■ 5-megapixel and 1.3-megapixel cameras ■ 3G/GPS/Bluetooth/802.11n Wi-Fi ■ 130 x 66 x 12mm ■ 143g

SOFTWARE & SERVICES

INTERNET SECURITY

Kaspersky Internet Security 2015

£17.99 from bit.ly/kaspoffer
Date tested: January 2015

Kaspersky Internet Security performed near-perfectly throughout our tests last year, with only one unwanted program slipping through. Our sister title *Computeractive* is selling it at the reader-offer price of £17.99 (full price £39.99). Click the link above.

KEY FEATURES

Anti-virus and firewall tools ■ Protects online shopping and banking ■ Identity and privacy tools ■ Dangerous-website alerts ■ Advanced parental control ■ Licences for one, three, and five PCs; for one or two years, or pay monthly ■ Multi-Device version for Mac and Android protection

PHOTO EDITING

Adobe Photoshop Elements 13

£81.08 from www.adobe.com/uk
Date tested: December 2014

With its tidy interface and pop-out trays, Adobe Photoshop Elements provides everything an amateur photographer needs and helps you quickly find the right editing tools.

KEY FEATURES

Compatible with Windows XP, Vista, 7, 8+ (32- and 64-bit) ■ Bundled photo organiser ■ Content-aware edits ■ Guided edits ■ People-beautifier tools ■ RAW support

VIDEO EDITING

Adobe Premiere Elements 13

£81.08 from www.adobe.com/uk
Date tested: December 2014

Premiere Elements 13's superb interface makes its many features neat but accessible. You won't find better video-editing software for the price.

KEY FEATURES

Automatic editing ■ Export to multiple video formats ■ Image stabiliser ■ DVD and Blu-ray disc-burning ■ Unlimited timelines ■ Stop-motion capture

ONLINE STORAGE

Google Drive

From free from drive.google.com
Date tested: August 2014

Google Drive is easy to use and has lots of free storage. The Windows software integrates with Explorer, so saving and syncing files is like keeping them in any other PC folder.

KEY FEATURES

15GB free storage ■ Web-based office software ■ Works with Windows XP, Vista, 7 and 8+ ■ Chrome browser add-on ■ Android and iOS apps ■ 100GB extra storage for £1.19 per month; 1TB for £5.97 per month; 10TB for £59.51 per month

ONLINE SITE BUILDER

Weebly

From free from www.weebly.com
Date tested: May 2014

Weebly's drag-and-drop interface makes it extremely easy to use. Its templates are a little restrictive, but there are still plenty of options to choose from and the results look great. It also has free Android and iOS apps.

KEY FEATURES

115 templates ■ Unlimited storage ■ SEO tools ■ Meta tags ■ Password protection ■ E-commerce tools ■ Ad-free Starter edition ■ Android and iOS apps ■ RSS ■ Site stats

Best Free Software

VIRTUAL GLOBE

Google Earth Pro

bit.ly/earthpro365

Min requirements:
Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ or Mac OS X
File size: 24.8MB

When Google Earth first launched, it was revolutionary, but 10 years on, Google Maps now delivers much of the same features in a browser, without the need for a download. However, if you're interested in exploring the planet (either for educational reasons or just for fun), then Earth provides a jaw-dropping experience and comes packed with features and information, including integration with Wikipedia and Panoramio.

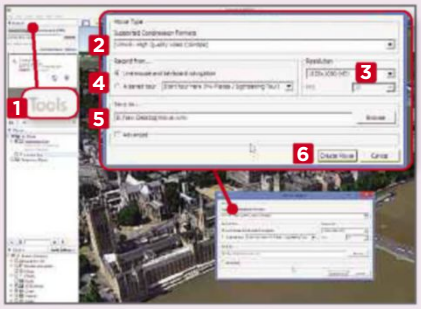
Alongside the free edition, Google offers a paid-for Pro version, with lots of advanced features including movie making; radius and area measurements; high-resolution printing; and the ability to import GIS (geographic information system) data. This version is aimed at business and enterprise users and comes with a hefty $399 (£262) price tag. Or rather it did. Google has now made it entirely free: you just install it, enter your email address as a username along with the licence key `GEPFREE`, and you're all set to go.

As you'd expect, the program looks and behaves just like the regular version of Google Earth, but with all the Pro extras to make it even more useful. In addition to the features we mentioned earlier, you can upload very large image files; map multiple points at once; and play around with innovative map-making and viewshed tools. The latter feature provides a 360-degree view of the area from a selected vantage point. In other words, it will show what you could actually see if you were physically standing at that point on the planet, with the view changing according to how high up you are.

MINI WORKSHOP | Explore the world with Google Earth Pro

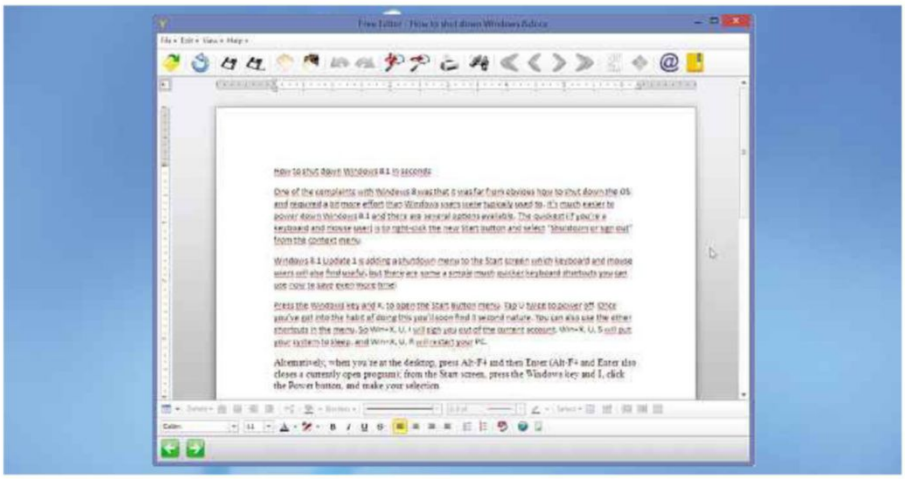
1 Google Earth Pro displays a 3D globe 1 that you can spin and zoom in and out of. The strip of images underneath it is the Tour Guide, which shows thumbnails of notable locations. 2 Select one to go on an automated journey. You can search for a location, 3 toggle layers on or off 4 and access various tools in the Toolbar. 5

2 To use the viewshed feature, create a placemark 1 at the point you want to view from. Right-click its entry under Places 2 and select 'Show Viewshed'. You'll see a message stating that the placemark is too low. Select 'Adjust Automatically'. Once the viewshed has been calculated, the visible area will be shown in green. 3



3 The movie-making option lets you record a video in real time or based on an existing tour. Go to Tools, 1 Movie Maker and select the compression format, 2 resolution 3 and recording method. 4 Give it a name 5 and click 'Create Movie'. 6 Click 'Stop Recording' when you've finished to watch the saved video.

This fortnight's top new software downloads to help you make the most of your PC, and they're all FREE



FILE EDITOR

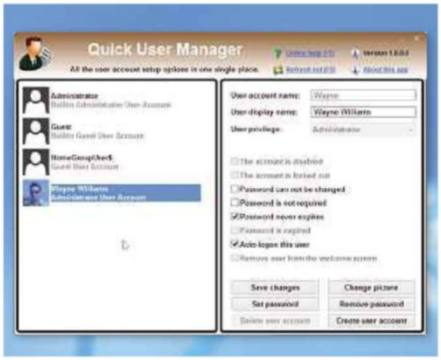
Free Editor

www.freeeditor.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ **File size:** 7.7MB

There are so many different file types that it's statistically likely you'll eventually encounter one you can't open or edit. Free Editor aims to solve this problem by providing a single tool for opening office documents; PDFs; image, video and audio files; ebooks and more. In total, it recognises more than 70 different file formats.

You can edit some (but not all) files and convert them to different formats. Make sure you decline the Bing extras during installation.



SYSTEM TOOL

Quick User Manager

bit.ly/quickuser365

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ **File size:** 369KB

If you have several family members accessing the same PC, each with their own user account, then this tiny program could prove useful. It handily puts all the user account options in one place, letting you change the account and display names, pictures and user privileges; set and remove passwords; and more – provided you have the relevant permissions. You can also create a new user account.

SEARCH TOOL

Recent File Seeker

www.carifred.com/rfs

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ **File size:** 300KB

This search tool finds new, recently modified and recently accessed files on your PC, which is useful if you can't remember the name of a particular item, or you want to check if your data has been accessed or altered. To use the program, specify the file extension, select the time period to search (10 days, for example) and decide what to include in your search results, which are provided as a printable text file.

New Windows 8 Apps

Selffina

bit.ly/selffina365

Min requirements: Windows 8+

File size: 10.8MB

Selffina is an app for tracking your income and expenses. It's password protected and provides a clear summary with charts, account balance and history, details of fund transfers and various other tools.

Orb Trials

bit.ly/orbtrials365

Min requirements: Windows 8+

File size: 36.3MB

Similar to the classic arcade game Marble Madness, the aim of Orb Trials is to guide your ball along a course, avoiding traps and other dangers. There are 60 levels to play through.

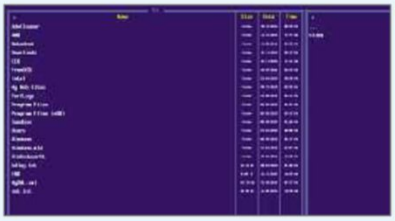
File Manager Gold

bit.ly/fileman365

Min requirements: Windows 8+

File size: 2.61MB

This is a basic two-paned file manager with a very retro design. It looks and works like Norton Commander, which anyone who used a PC back in the days of DOS may be familiar with.

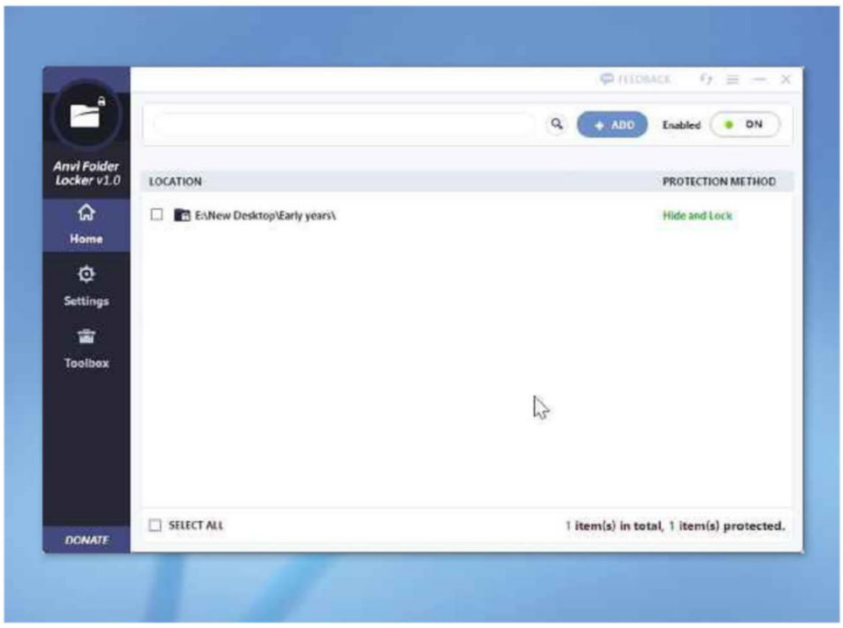


FOLDER HIDER

Anvi Folder Locker Free

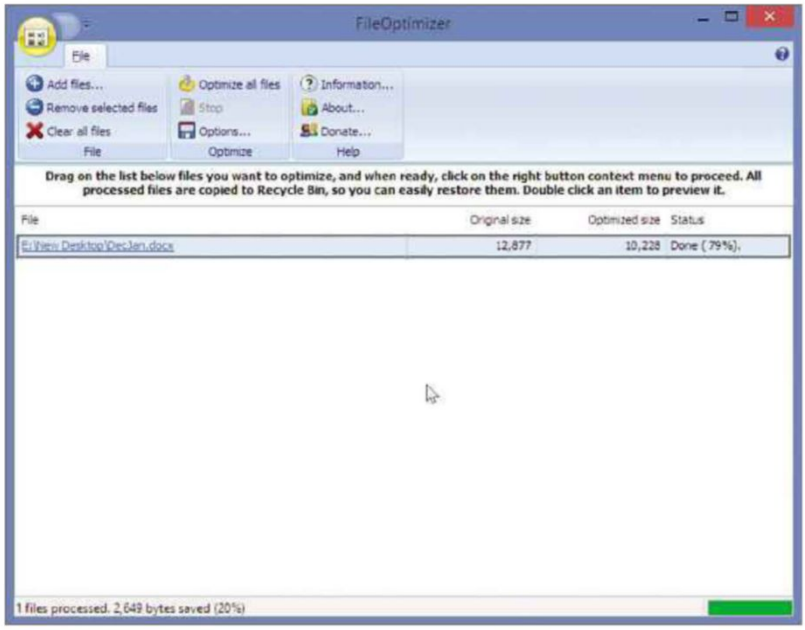
www.anvisoft.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 13.9MB



Anvi's new Folder Locker Free lets you manage and protect any personal files on your PC that you want kept safe from snoopers. You can lock files and folders, hide them and change permissions, so they can't be modified, moved or deleted. During installation, Explorer will need to be restarted. This should happen automatically, though you may need to reboot your PC if it doesn't.

Enter a master password to begin using the software. Then simply add the items you want to prevent other people accessing and choose a protection method – Hide, Lock, Read Only, 'Hide and Lock' or Password Protect – from the drop-down menu.



FILE SHRINKER

FileOptimizer 7

bit.ly/fileop365

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 41.4MB

Even if you have a fast broadband connection, sending large files can be slow work. FileOptimizer reduces the size of files saved in the most popular formats so you can send them more quickly. It works by applying various third-party 'recompression' and optimisation techniques; you just add items and click the button to shrink them. You can see both the original and optimised file sizes, and there are plenty of options available to play around with, including changing the optimisation level and the order in which files are processed.

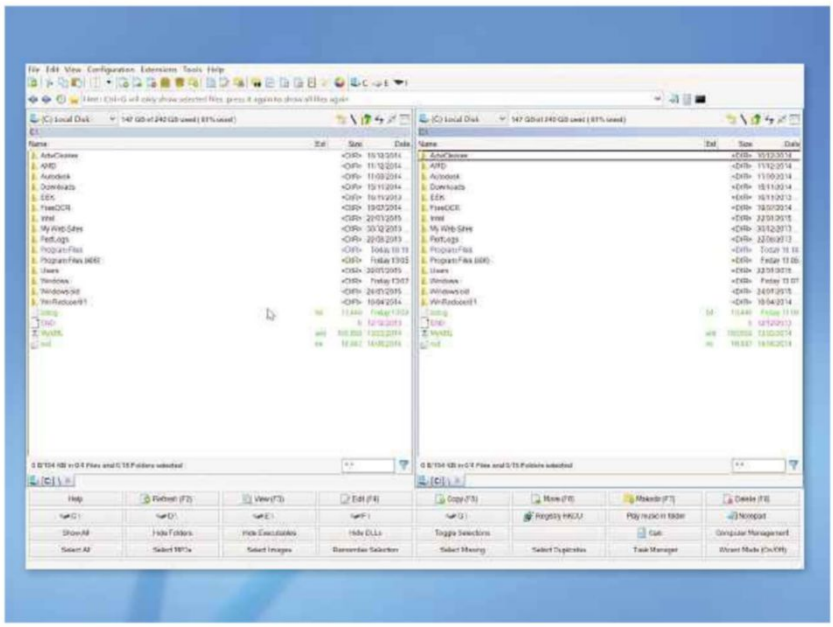
The latest version of FileOptimizer can optimise additional formats, including FLAC, MP4 and many more.

FILE MANAGER

Multi Commander 5

multicommander.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+
File size: 8MB



The standard Windows Explorer (called File Explorer in Windows 8) works well for browsing your files, but it's a little basic. Multi Commander has a dual-panel layout, making it much easier to copy files between locations. It also has support for tabs, so you can have multiple folders within easy reach at all times. You can customise the program in lots of ways, and it provides a quick-launch bar and a field for entering commands. The latest build introduces some handy tools for sorting, finding and replacing files, and improves the picture viewer. It also fixes a lot of bugs.

There are installer and portable versions of Multi Commander available to download.

GAME

Bullet Hills

bit.ly/bullet365

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+ **File size:** 11.5MB

Bullet Hills is a typing game crossed with Dance Dance Revolution. As you might expect from that description, the aim of the game is to type in time with the beat. It's surprisingly difficult, even if you're a proficient touch-typist, because it's hard to resist typing as fast as possible rather than staying in rhythm. There are three music tracks and 10 different typing levels.

✗ Don't install...

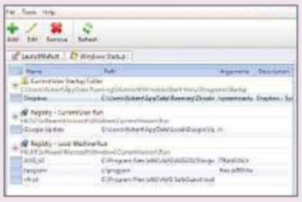
LaunchMeNot

launchmenot.codeplex.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7

File size: 900KB

Preventing unwanted programs from running on start-up helps to speed up your PC, but despite LaunchMeNot's amusingly Frankie Howerd-esque name and a basic interface that's easy to use, the program only identified a single entry in our Startup folder out of more than a dozen, and only lets you remove items rather than disabling or delaying them.



...Install this instead ✓

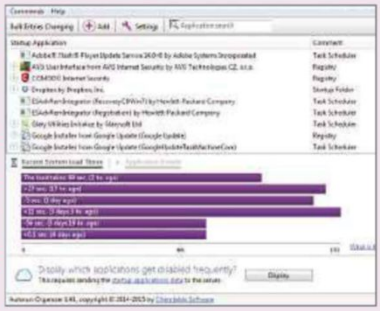
Autorun Organizer

www.chemtable.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+

File size: 2.2MB

This free program makes it incredibly easy to reduce your PC's boot time. It lists everything that runs on start-up and lets you disable, delay or remove specific entries, as required. You can switch to the Bulk Entries Changing option to manage multiple items at once; and right-click an entry to view its Properties, open the containing folder and search the web for more information about it. Usefully, Autorun Organizer provides a record of recent start-up times, so you can find out if a program you've installed recently is slowing down your PC. It also shows the start-up items disabled most frequently by other users; on our PC, this list was topped by Glary Utilities.



UPDATED | New tweaks and fixes for your favourite free programs

OFFICE SUITE

LibreOffice 4.4.0

www.libreoffice.org

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+, Mac OS X or Linux

File size: 214MB

This free, open-source alternative to Microsoft Office includes a word processor, spreadsheet, presentation tool and more. The new version has a more attractive interface along with lots of bug fixes, improvements and enhancements.

PRIVACY TOOL

PrivaZer 2.26.1

privazer.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+

File size: 13.6MB

PrivaZer is a powerful privacy sweeper that's designed to remove all references to everything you've ever downloaded, opened or deleted. The latest version makes improvements to several features including tidying up log files, monitoring shadow copies and cleaning the pagefile.sys.

SYSTEM TOOL

Synei System Utilities 2.25

www.synei.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+

File size: 7.2MB

Synei System Utilities offers a 1-Click Maintenance mode and a selection of individual tools for fixing and tuning your PC. Features such as the PC Cleaner and Startup Manager have been improved in the new version, alongside bug fixes and stability improvements.

PHOTO EDITOR

Image Tuner

www.glorylogic.com

Min requirements: Windows XP/Vista/7/8+

File size: 2.1MB

Image Tuner can automatically apply a selection of tweaks to a batch of photos, including resizing and renaming them, and coverting files to different formats. The image-processing engine has been updated and the software now automatically checks for updates. ■

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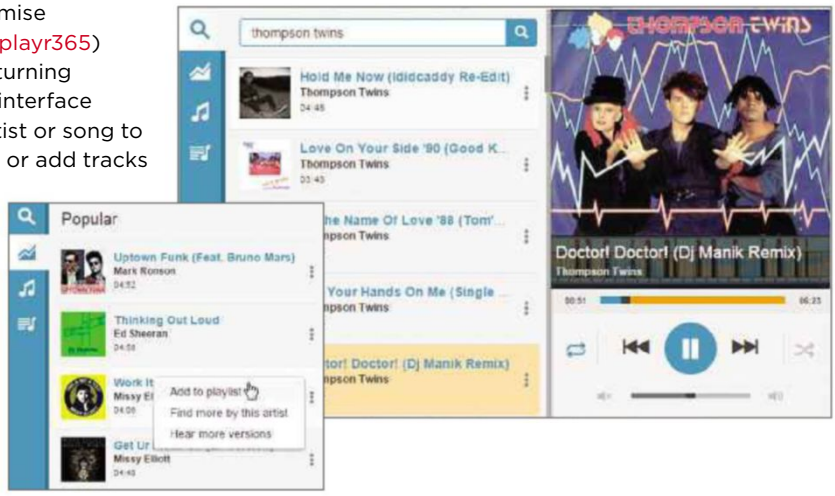
Best New Browser Tools

CHROME

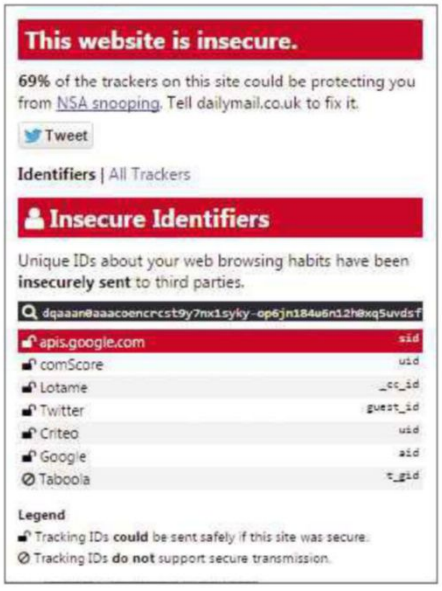
Listen to unlimited free music as you browse the web

We're always suspicious of web tools that promise something unlimited for free, but Playr (bit.ly/playr365) genuinely gives you access to endless music, turning Chrome into your personal jukebox. Its smart interface couldn't be easier to use: just search for an artist or song to show results on the left, then either listen now or add tracks to a playlist for later. There are also handy options to find more music by the artist and hear different versions of a song. If you're not sure what to play, there's a list of the most popular tracks or you can browse by genre, including Classical, Rock and World. You can use the extension from anywhere on the web, streaming music at "MP3 quality" at the click of a toolbar button. It's one of the most impressive add-ons we've seen so far this year.



Identify websites that use unencrypted tracking

Most websites have some form of embedded tracker, whether for advertising, social media or analytics, but you want to be sure that they handle the data they collect securely. Tracker SSL (bit.ly/tracker365) alerts you when third-party tracking tools on a site don't use HTTPS, which encrypts the information sent between your computer and web servers. The add-on assigns a score to each page you visit, based on how secure its trackers are, so you can see whether it's safe to browse. Tracker SSL doesn't block trackers – indeed, it works best with blocking tools such as Disconnect turned off – but it's a useful means of discovering which sites you should avoid, or which ones you should nag to improve their security practices.



Learn Japanese words on your New Tab page

Japanese is often said to be one of the most difficult languages for English speakers to learn, but a new Chrome extension called Mainichi (bit.ly/japan365) aims to make building your Japanese vocabulary simple and fun. Every time you open a new tab, the add-on displays a different Japanese word (in both Hiragana and Kanji writing) with a phonetic pronunciation, an English translation and a helpful illustration. Currently, Mainichi only has 500 words in its database, but this number is increasing all the time.

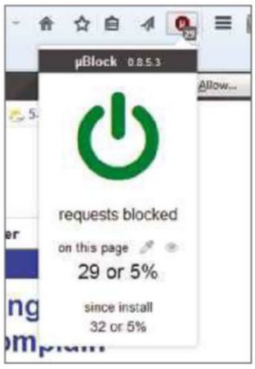
Add images to every link you tweet about

If you want to share an interesting link on Twitter, you can save yourself a lot of clicking, copying and pasting by installing the excellent add-on TwitShot (bit.ly/twitshot365). Simply click the toolbar button to generate a tweet that includes the web address of the page you're viewing and a screen grab. If you don't like the image, you can upload an alternative from your hard drive or search for one online. You can also share a picture by right-clicking it and selecting 'Tweet this image', and access TwitShot directly from Twitter by clicking the new button it places next to the standard Tweet one. TwitShot speeds up tweeting and the inclusion of an image increases your chances of being retweeted.

This fortnight's most useful tips and add-ons to help you get the most from Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer and more

FIREFOX

Block online ads without wasting memory



We've frequently recommended the Chrome extension uBlock, a lightweight alternative to Adblock Plus, and now it's finally available for Firefox. However, at the time of going to press, it wasn't yet available through the browser's Add-ons site, which means you'll need to install the beta version from bit.ly/ublock365 and click Allow when prompted. Despite using a lot less memory than Adblock Plus, uBlock is equally effective at blocking adverts on web pages because it uses the same filter lists. You don't need to configure any settings, but its toolbar button shows you how many adverts it's blocked on the current page and since you installed it, and lets you disable blocking on specific sites.

See Page 404 at the back of this issue for Barry Collins' view on Adblock Plus.

Get easy access to hidden privacy settings

Firefox deliberately tucks away its advanced privacy settings in its 'about:config' section, but a new add-on called Tinfoil (bit.ly/tinfoil365) makes the most useful ones more accessible. Once it's installed, press Ctrl+Shift+A to open the Add-ons Manager and click the Options button next to Tinfoil. Here you'll see a list of 'about:config' privacy settings, accompanied by explanations of what each one does, for example: "browser.newtabpage.enhanced – Use the new enhanced tiles on the about.newtab page". You can select and deselect options individually, or click Full Tinfoil to apply all the recommended settings.

Prevent specific websites from tracking you

Lightbeam (bit.ly/lightbeam365), which exposes the third-party tracking tools lurking in every site you visit, has long been one of our favourite privacy tools for Firefox, and it's now added a Tracking Protection feature. This blocks known tracking domains by default to stop them following you around the web; just click the Tracking Protection button in the top-right corner to turn it on. You can also block individual trackers by clicking the List option in the left-hand column to see all the sites you've connected with during your current session. Select any unwanted entries in the list and click the Block Site button.

Refresh Firefox to fix performance problems

If Firefox is slow or keeps crashing, you can use Mozilla's new Refresh option to give the browser a tune-up and hopefully fix any problems. Just visit the official Firefox download page (bit.ly/mozilla365) and you'll see a Refresh Firefox button. Click this to reset your add-ons and settings, which should hopefully improve the browser's performance.

OTHER BROWSERS

Hide your location from websites

In Issue 361 (bit.ly/webuser361), we ran a Workshop about the Firefox add-on Location Guard (bit.ly/location361), which lets you conceal your location from nosy websites that use geo-location to pinpoint where you are. It's now available for Opera, with exactly the same features: you can choose whether or not to tell a site your whereabouts; apply "noise" to fool it into thinking you're somewhere else; and choose from three privacy levels that let you trick a website into thinking you're 200m, 500m or 2km away from where you really are. For sites that require accurate location data, such as mapping and weather resources, you can choose to 'Use real location'.

Try the new IE version of Ghostery

Internet Explorer users don't often get the chance to try an exciting new add-on, but privacy tool Ghostery (ghostery.com) has just released a "new and much improved" version for IE. Ghostery is available for all the major browsers and protects your privacy online by blocking trackers in web pages (which seems to be a bit of a theme in this issue's Best New Browser Tools!). The updated IE add-on is compatible with all versions of the browser from 8 to 11, and blocks new trackers by default. You can download Ghostery 4 for IE from www.ghostery.com/download. Turn to page 51 for our 'Take a Screen Break' IE quiz.

Best Free Apps

App of the Fortnight

PHOTOS

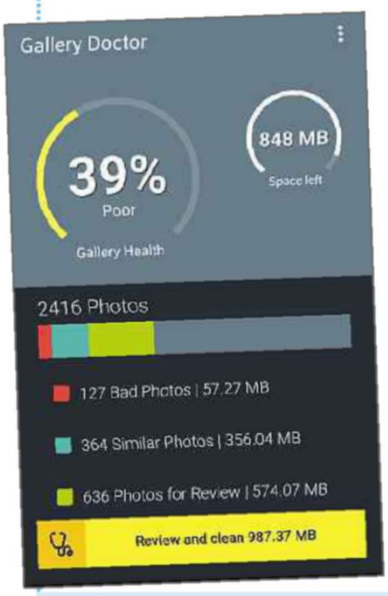
Gallery Doctor

NEW

bit.ly/gallery365

Min requirements: Android 2.3.3

Size: 12MB



Gallery Doctor helps you free up storage on your phone or tablet by identifying unwanted photos that take up valuable space. The app automatically detects images that are dark, blurry or very similar to one another and lets you review the results, swiping left to clear photos or swiping right to keep them. Its developers claim that the average user has as much as 2GB worth of unwanted photos on their device and that Gallery Doctor helps to reclaim up to 32 per cent of storage on first use.

Furthermore, the app learns the type of photos you don't like based on the images you delete, making it even more effective the more you use it. By deleting photos from your phone or tablet, Gallery Doctor not only frees up space on your device, but can also make it run faster. We thought the app was very well designed and made an otherwise tedious job much quicker and easier. On our device, Gallery Doctor took only a few minutes to scan 2,500 photos, identifying more than 1,000 that we could potentially delete.

Our rating ★★★★★

ENTERTAINMENT

Dull

NEW

bit.ly/dull365

Min requirements: iOS 6

Size: 24.8MB

Dull aims to make sure you never have to endure another boring moment by showing you 'the best of the internet' all in one place. The app lets you subscribe to a wide range of feeds including those from reddit, Instagram, Soundcloud, YouTube and Pinterest, and you're then presented with a series of cards containing trending content from the web. By default, the app clears each card within ten seconds, so you need to tap it if it's a video, GIF or sound clip that you want to play. Alternatively, you can swipe left to clear a card, double-tap to save it or swipe right to share it with you friends. Unfortunately, our feed contained a lot of adverts, but these can be removed by paying £2.29.

Our rating ★★★☆☆

LANGUAGES

Drops

UPDATED

bit.ly/drops365

Min requirements: iOS 7

Size: 40.2MB

Drops helps you learn foreign languages by teaching you the most important vocabulary in 5-minute daily lessons. After choosing from French, German, Italian or Spanish, you'll embark on a 10-day challenge, playing games that use visual cues to teach you new words before testing your knowledge. There's even a head-to-head option that lets you compete with other Drops users to see who's learned the most. The thinking behind the app's short sessions is that your concentration should not diminish, meaning you'll retain more of what you're taught. We certainly enjoyed using the app and found it an engaging way of learning the type of vocabulary that's essential for a European city break.

Our rating ★★★★☆

This fortnight's top free and paid-for apps for Android, iOS and Windows phones and tablets, and smart TVs

SERVICES

NEW

Laundrapp

bit.ly/laundrapp365

Min requirements: Android 4.0.3, iOS 7

Size: 13MB

Laundrapp spares you the hassle of visiting a laundrette by connecting you to a network of laundry and dry-cleaning professionals, so you can have your dirty clothes collected, cleaned and delivered at your convenience. Prices start from £2, but it will cost you £15 to have 1.5 normal washloads washed, dried and folded (with no further delivery costs). That's pretty good value for money if you're temporarily without a washing machine. Laundrapp is currently only available in London and Edinburgh, but is set to be rolled out to more UK cities soon.

Our rating ★★★★☆

DATING

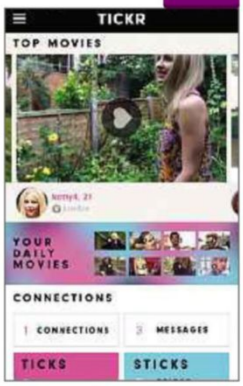
NEW

Tickr

bit.ly/tickr365

Min requirements: Android 4.0, iOS 7

Size: 8.3MB



Tickr is a dating app with a difference. Instead of relying on photos and compatibility tests, it requires you to record a 30-second video clip to introduce yourself to prospective dates. When browsing other users' profiles, you can tap Tick if you like them or Ick if you don't. The people who you liked will then be shown your introductory video and, if they approve, you'll be able to text or video message each other privately. You need to set up an account to use the app, which is free for a limited time only.

Our rating ★★★★★

CREATIVE

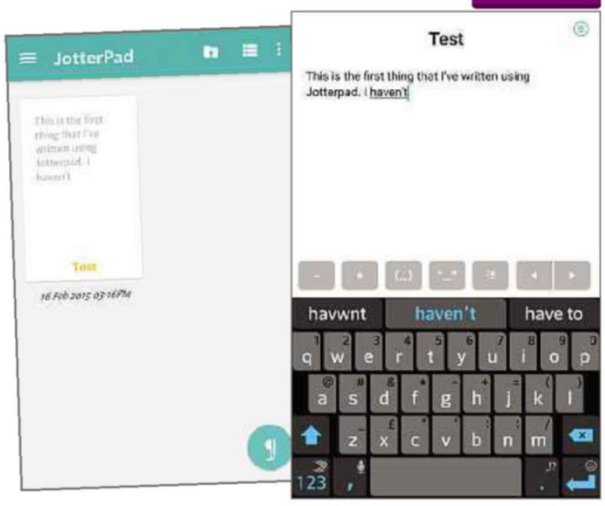
UPDATED

JotterPad

bit.ly/jotter365

Min requirements: Android 4.1

Size: 11MB



JotterPad is a free text editor for your Android device. Aimed at creative writers, it contains all the tools you need to write novels, lyrics, poems, essays and screenplays. The app's minimal interface means there's no clutter to distract you, and its built-in Undo and Redo buttons give you complete control over the changes you make to your document. There's even a handy word-count tool to help you keep track of your progress. Some of the app's more advanced features are only unlocked if you buy its 'Get Creative' add-on for £4, but the free version includes Dropbox integration and you can share your work in a number of file formats. Although JotterPad's Play Store page clearly warns users that it lacks an auto-save feature, we're hoping this will be introduced soon.

Our rating ★★★★☆

ROUND UP | Quick bites

Swiftkey

bit.ly/swiftkey365

Min requirements: iOS 8

Size: 33.4MB

When Swiftkey was first released on iOS in September 2014, it lacked some of the features of the Android version of the app. Now, however, it has been updated and includes hundreds of emoji (smileys), 11 new languages and a dozen different types of keyboard sound effects. For the first time on iPad, you can now also swipe between letters using Swiftkey Flow instead of tapping them individually.

Blinq

bit.ly/blinq365

Min requirements: Android 4.3

Size: 13MB

Juggling social media and messaging apps becomes a thing of the past with Blinq, which collates your contacts' latest social-networking activity in one place. When you open a conversation in a messaging app such as Whatsapp, Facebook Messenger or Hangouts, Blinq appears as a small white dot that can be opened with a single tap to show what that contact has been up to on a variety of social networks including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.

DATA-COLLECTION TOOL

UPDATED

Instant - Quantified Self

bit.ly/instant365

Min requirements: Android 4.0
Size: 2.3MB

Instant – Quantified Self tracks multiple aspects of your life including your phone usage, travel and fitness. Once installed, the app immediately starts logging data, such as the number of times you've unlocked your device and how long you've spent using its installed apps. You can see a quick summary of this data on the homepage or tap Graph to view a more detailed breakdown. There's also a useful option to set up alerts that notify you when you've spent too much time on your device. Tap the Fitness tab to sign into Google Fit and start tracking the number of steps you've taken along with time spent travelling.

Our rating ★★★☆☆

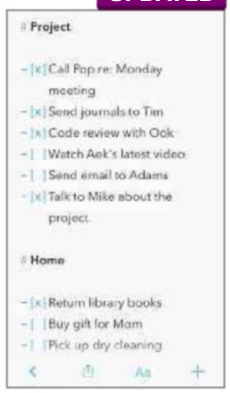
PRODUCTIVITY

UPDATED

Letterspace

bit.ly/letterspace365

Min requirements: iOS 7.1
Size: 7.5MB



This beautifully designed note-taking app lets you use swipe-based gestures to control basic functions such as moving the cursor, highlighting text and hiding the keyboard. All notes made with Letterspace are fully searchable and it also supports mentions and hashtags, making it easy to group related notes. The interface is very simple and you can change the font and type size according to your preferences; extra themes are also available via an in-app purchase. The option to back up and sync your notes via iCloud is one of Letterspace's standout features, but we'd like to see a faster way of turning notes into to-do lists.

Our rating ★★★★☆

5 NEW APPS WORTH PAYING FOR

NEWS

Reuters TV

bit.ly/reuters365

Min requirements: iOS 8
Size: 47.1MB **Price:** Free (with in-app purchases)

Reuters' new TV app offers live, unfiltered video feeds along with on-demand, tailored news shows. It's free for a month, after which you'll have to pay £1.49 a month to carry on using the service.

EMAIL

Mail Pilot 2

bit.ly/mailpilot365

Min requirements: iOS 8
Size: 23.2MB **Price:** £5.99

Mail Pilot offers a task-orientated approach to email with each new message representing an entry on your to-do list. When you've read an email, you can change its status to complete, set a reminder to look at it again or simply flick it away.

PRODUCTIVITY

Quest

bit.ly/quest365

Min requirements: iOS 7.1
Size: 6.5MB **Price:** 79p

Quest is a task-management app that makes a game out of completing your to-do list. With every job you successfully complete, you collect points, which can be used to level up and equip your 8-bit character with new items.

FOOD

Where Chefs Eat

bit.ly/chefs365

Min requirements: iOS 7
Size: 5.6MB **Price:** £10.99

Produced by arts publisher Phaidon, Where Chefs Eat lets you browse thousands of restaurant recommendations from 600 of the world's best chefs. The app even has a handy location tool built in to help you find eateries that are nearby, and view contact details.

PRODUCTIVITY

Workflow

bit.ly/workflow365

Min requirements: iOS 8
Size: 22.9MB **Price:** £2.49

Like IFTTT, Workflow lets you combine actions you perform on your device to create automated workflows. It's recently been updated to include more than 50 new actions.

Reuters TV | Mail Pilot 2 | Quest | Where Chefs Eat | Workflow

Best New TV Apps

FOOD & DRINK

Watch Food Network UK

bit.ly/foodandroid365

Min requirements: Android 4.03, iOS 7.1
Size: 4MB

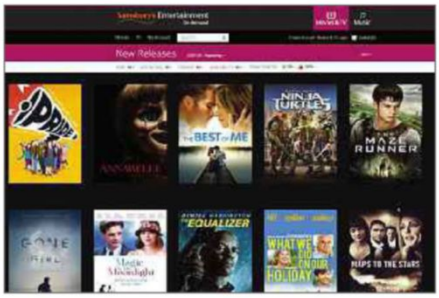
Fans of *Barefoot Contessa*, *Mystery Diners*, *The Big Eat* and other Food Network UK shows can now watch them whenever and wherever they want on the channel's new Android and iOS app. As well as viewing programmes live, you can play episodes of your favourite series from the last seven days, and set reminders so you don't miss upcoming shows. The app also lets you browse the Food Network UK schedule and, in the iOS version, stream content to your TV via AirPlay; hopefully, the ability to stream via Chromecast will be added to the Android version soon. Although it doesn't contain recipes, Watch Food Network UK is already proving popular with viewers, and has received plenty of five-star ratings.

FILM & TV

Sainsbury's Entertainment

movies.sainsburysentertainment.co.uk

Min requirements: Android 2.3.3, iOS 7, Xbox 360, Roku, Windows 8.1, Mac OS
Size: Varies



Tesco may have closed Clubcard TV and sold Blinkbox to TalkTalk, but that hasn't stopped rival supermarket Sainsbury's from launching its own service for streaming films and TV shows. Available on a variety of platforms, Sainsbury's Entertainment lets you watch content on your television (via the Xbox 360 or the Roku streaming stick), tablet or phone; or in a browser on your PC; or stream it to Apple TV via AirPlay. There's a reasonable selection of movies and series to choose from, although the service isn't particularly cheap, with new releases costing £4.49 to rent and as much as £14.99 to buy. TV shows are generally £2.49 per episode, with titles including *Breaking Bad*, *House of Cards* and *Dallas*.

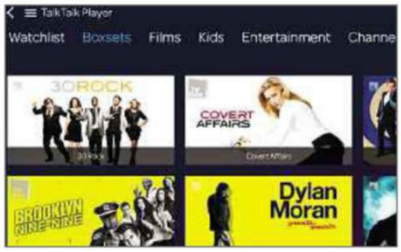
TELEVISION

TV2Go

bit.ly/tv2go365

Min requirements: Android 4.1, iOS 7, TalkTalk YouView box
Size: 40MB

TalkTalk continues to expand its TV services with this new app, which works in a similar way to SkyGo. Customers with a TalkTalk YouView box can watch live TV and catch-up content over a Wi-Fi connection on their Android and iOS phones and tablets. However, not all mobile devices are supported, so it's worth checking at help2.talktalk.co.uk/about-tv2go before you install the app. This page also lists the channels available on TV2Go, which include Syfy, Comedy Central and History. You can connect two devices, and pause programmes on your TV then continue watching them on your phone or tablet. The app has parental controls and you can save on-demand shows to watch later.



✗ Don't install...

UK Traffic News

bit.ly/uktraffic365

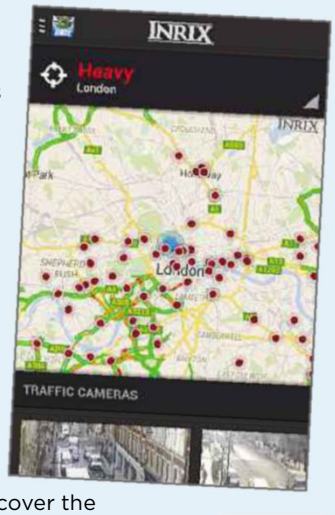
There are almost as many traffic-update apps on Google Play as there are for weather, but UK Traffic News is far from the best. Described by one user as having "no useful features at all", it provides access to the latest traffic reports from Traffic England (www.trafficengland.co.uk). Its other options simply take you to Twitter and Google Maps, which you can just as easily visit without the app. It's unappealingly basic, very slow and the constant ads are infuriating.

...Install this instead ✓

INRIX Traffic, Maps & Alerts

bit.ly/inrix365

Min requirements: Android (version varies with device), iOS 7.1
Size: 32.3MB



This excellent app automatically detects your location to provide all the traffic information you need on a single screen. This includes a summary of current traffic conditions ("heavy", unsurprisingly, in London); a map showing the location of roadworks, accidents, road closures and other obstructions; and live traffic webcams. As well as listing incidents in your area, the app tells you the extent of traffic back-ups and delays. It doesn't yet cover the whole of the UK, but because it sources data from users and in-car navigation systems, its accuracy, scope and usefulness will increase as more people install it.

Instant Expert

Our guide to Microsoft's HoloLens

Is this real life or just fantasy? It's a question we may be asking ourselves in the near future, thanks to the Microsoft HoloLens. **David Crookes** explains

What is it?

HoloLens is Microsoft's new 'holographic' headset with transparent HD lenses. It doesn't strictly involve holograms, but when you wear the futuristic device, you can see and interact with virtual 3D images that are superimposed on the real objects and environment around you. Microsoft believes this will be the future of computing.

Is it virtual reality?

No, it's actually advanced augmented reality (AR). Whereas virtual-reality headsets such as Oculus Rift (www.oculus.com) and Sony's Project Morpheus (bit.ly/morpheus365) immerse you in an entirely digital environment, augmented reality blends the real world with a virtual one. Remember the 1988 film *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*, which was part-cartoon, part-reality? The effect of AR is not entirely dissimilar.

So it's like Google Glass then?

To an extent. Glass (www.google.com/glass), which has now been withdrawn from sale, let users receive small amounts of information overlaid on to the real world, but it was really intended to be worn as a fashion accessory that could get directions, check your messages and snap photos while freeing your hands from a phone or tablet. HoloLens is more ambitious because it's a complete replacement for a computer and, while it is aimed at a consumer audience, it also has many applications for business.

What will I be able to do with it?

The possibilities are endless. Just as smartphones now perform tasks no-one considered possible a few years ago, so HoloLens will evolve. For now, Microsoft has explained its potential use for games (the Minecraft-inspired HoloBuilder was shown in demonstration videos), medicine and even space travel, following its work with NASA (bit.ly/nasa365). A promo video showed a dad helping his daughter fix a sink by overlaying instructions on the pipes.

It could also be used for interior design, allowing you to walk into an empty room wearing the device and visualise how furniture and different colours would look. Additionally, workers will be able to remotely collaborate on projects and see what their colleagues are seeing.

How does HoloLens work?

When you put on the headset, it automatically measures the distance between your eyes and calibrates itself so that it can pinpoint where you are focusing while you wear it. The headset (which is actually nicknamed Project Baraboo) is then able to 'spatially map' your real-life environment, working out where your furniture and other objects are located. By overlaying digital images on that environment, HoloLens tricks you into believing the virtual objects exist in the real world.

Will I need to connect it to my PC?

Unlike the Oculus Rift, which currently needs to be connected to a computer or mobile device, the HoloLens is a standalone unit that doesn't

use any wires. Microsoft has made a lot of noise about this aspect, and when you consider all the electronic gubbins on the headset, you can see why it is so proud. Indeed, it not only carries a high-end central processor, but a graphics processor and a holographic processing unit (HPU), too.

What does the HPU do?

It is the key component of HoloLens, enabling the headset to process whole terabytes of information in a very short space of time. It works out what you are seeing, takes into account your head's direction and movement, and assesses your gestures, before turning graphics into holographic projections that are then displayed on the lenses in a realistic manner. It even detects the edges of objects to ensure no graphics are overlaid on to them (otherwise you'd accidentally trip over hidden items).

How is HoloLens controlled?

By a combination of voice commands and hand gestures, such as raising and lowering a finger to click. In that sense, it's not unlike Microsoft's Kinect system, which responds to gestures when you're playing the Xbox 360 or Xbox One, and recognises your voice. If you need to see the back of an object that is in front of you, you can simply walk to the other side of it. The only buttons you really need to press are those on the headset for volume and contrast.

Will it make me feel ill?

So far, it would appear that HoloLens doesn't cause headaches or nausea in the way 3D sometimes can, although longer-term testing may prove otherwise. Some people have reported problems with HoloLens when wearing spectacles because, in prototype form at least, it can be quite uncomfortable.

Can I hear as well as see?

Yes. The headset has speakers that allow for spatial sound. You will be able to hear what is going on behind your head as much as what is in front of you. This will immerse you even more into the holographic world that is being created by HoloLens, making the digital images appear more integral to your environment.

How good are the images?

Those who have tried HoloLens have praised the images as sharp and vivid. Depictions of real people look lifelike and objects appear solid, easily fooling the brain into thinking they are actually there. You can also have Skype conversations where the image of the person you are talking to hovers in your view.

What will the battery life be like?

It's early days, so there's currently no indication about battery life. Neither is there any information about how long you should ideally wear the headset for. Thankfully, the device won't cook your head because the heat it generates is released from the sides.

Will it work with Windows 10?

Yes, Windows 10 will include full support for HoloLens, allowing developers to create holographic experiences in the real world. All Windows universal apps will be able to work as holograms.

Can I make my own holograms with HoloLens?

Yes. Microsoft has created an app called HoloStudio that works with the headset. It lets you generate your own virtual objects by pulling various digital pieces together and manipulating them to create something new. The resulting object can even be printed using a 3D printer.

When will HoloLens be coming out?

Microsoft has been working on HoloLens for five years but it appears not to be entirely ready for release just yet. The company says it will be out within the lifetime of Windows 10, which we take to mean within the next four years. There have so far been no indications of what it might cost.

MORE AUGMENTED-REALITY DEVICES

ODG

www.osterhoutgroup.com

Military contractor Osterhout Design Group (ODG) revealed its first consumer AR smart glasses at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas earlier this year. They look like chunky sunglasses but they boast a Qualcomm Snapdragon 805 processor, HD stereoscopic dual displays and high-transparency optics. When worn, the Android Lollipop-driven glasses give the impression of having a tablet display in front of your face.

Magic Leap

www.magicleap.com

With a $542 million (£356 million) investment from Google, Magic Leap has had a big hand in jumping the queue with its augmented-reality technology. Its patent shows a headset that looks similar to a pair of skiing goggles, containing sensors that track the location and position of the wearer. Like HoloLens, Magic Leap will superimpose images on the wearer's surrounding environment. However, it's still very early days for this start-up.

DOWNLOAD ANONYMOUSLY

COVER FEATURE

Wayne Williams reveals how to keep your downloads completely private, so no-one will ever know which files you're grabbing from the web

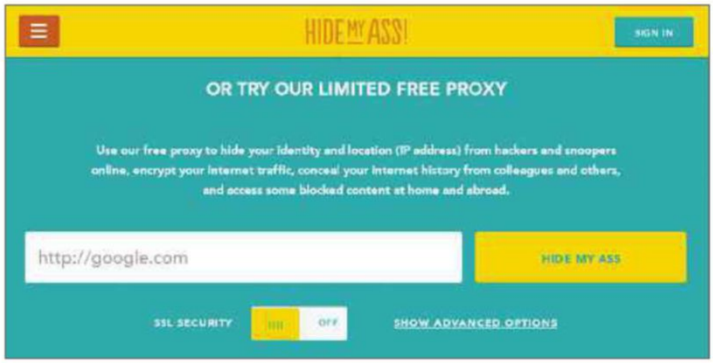
Just as you're never truly alone when you browse the web – with advertisers, your ISP and even government agencies watching what you do – your downloads are also vulnerable to snoopers. This might not seem too alarming if you're not illegally downloading copyrighted films or amassing a stash of adult videos, but it's still an invasion of privacy and allows unknown third parties to build up a picture of your online activities.

Fortunately, there are plenty of ways to prevent anyone else from knowing which files you're downloading and have already downloaded, whether you're using your PC, mobile device or somebody else's computer.

In this feature, we show you how to use torrenting tools anonymously; download files via a proxy server or a VPN (Virtual Private Network); use a seedbox for super-fast (and totally unidentifiable) downloads; grab files from Usenet; and lock, hide and clean up folders once you've finished downloading.

ON THE WEB

Use a proxy server for downloads



A proxy server acts as an intermediary between your computer and the internet. Traffic that's routed through a proxy appears to come from the server's IP address, instead of your computer's. This makes a proxy ideal for downloading files discreetly because it conceals the connection between your PC and the download site. Proxies usually use one of two different protocols – HTTP (for websites) or SOCKS (any kind of internet traffic, including torrents).

There are two types of proxy server: public, which is free and can be used by anyone (usually only covers HTTP); and private, which delivers a more reliable and secure service but you have to pay for. For public proxies, we recommend Hide My Ass (www.hidemyass.com/proxy). This is limited by having servers in only three countries, compared to the 63 countries Hide My Ass's VPN tools span, but very easy to use: just enter the name of the download site, turn SSL security on and click the Hide My Ass button. We also like Anonymouse (anonymouse.org), which is even more basic but fast, and Proxy 4 Free (www.proxy4free.com), where you'll find a list of fast, free proxy servers.

If you'd prefer to use a private proxy to anonymise files you download using non-browser software, try Proxy Solutions (www.proxysolutions.net), which costs from $12 (£7.85) per month, with a three-day free trial; or TorGuard (bit.ly/torguard365), which is designed to work with torrents and costs $5.95 (£3.89) per month.

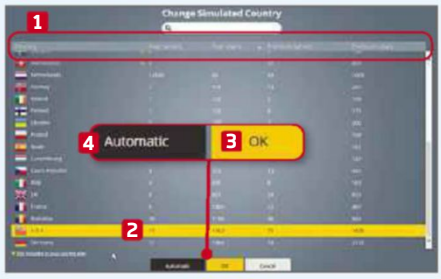
Protect your identity using a VPN

Although VPNs also make it look as if you're browsing from a different location, they differ from proxies by encrypting all your traffic. Once you connect to the VPN server, all your internet activity is disguised, including downloads from websites and torrents. It's like creating a secure web tunnel from your PC to your download destination.

There are lots of great VPNs to choose from, many of which offer a free service so you can find out whether the service is suitable for your needs before upgrading to the paid-for option for faster downloads and more features. CyberGhost (www.cyberghostvpn.com) is our personal favourite and gives you unlimited bandwidth and traffic. Upgrade to the Premium service for just £3.99 a month and you get more

MINI WORKSHOP | Disguise what you're downloading using CyberGhost

1 Run CyberGhost to display a map showing Your Real Location and current IP address. 1 Use the Simulated Country 2 drop-down menu to choose a fake location you will appear to be downloading from. Alternatively, you can manually pick a server and IP address, 3 although this probably won't be necessary.



2 Not all the simulated countries are included in the free version of CyberGhost, and there are only a limited number of free servers available. You can sort the list by country, free servers and number of users. 1 Select a country that has servers available 2 to join and click OK 3 or select Automatic. 4

3 To switch to your simulated country, click the big yellow button. 1 It's common for all the free slots to be blocked so you may need to wait until the next one becomes available. When it does, a Connected message will appear 2 and the marker will move to the simulated location and display your new IP address. 3 Click the yellow button again to disable the VPN.

servers and countries, a five-fold increase in speed and no waiting times. See our Mini Workshop on page 39 to find out how to use CyberGhost.

Other good options are TunnelBear (www.tunnelbear.com), which lets you download 500MB of data a month for free or pay $4.99 (£3.26) for unlimited 'tunnelling'; and Hola (hola.org), a peer-to-peer VPN service compatible with most browsers and mobile platforms that is free for private use.

Download torrents anonymously

BitTorrent continues to be very popular for downloading music, films and TV shows, but the way it works makes it easy for snoopers to see who you are and what you're downloading. One of the easiest ways to protect your identity when downloading torrents is to use Tribler (www.tribler.org), a BitTorrent program designed to offer anonymous downloading. It's a work in progress, so it's not yet as anonymous as it hopes to be, which means you may not want to trust it completely, but it's a lot more private than most torrent tools.

Another option is an anonymous proxy such as TorrentPrivacy (www.torrentprivacy.com) to disguise who you are. It will set you back $6 (£3.90) per month or $58 (£37.90) for the year. Alternatively, BTGuard (btguard.com) offers an anonymising BitTorrent proxy for £4.68 per month, or a VPN for £6.71 per month.

VPNs are a good solution for downloading torrents anonymously, but you'll probably need to sign up to a paid-for service, because most (but not all) free VPNs tend to be too slow for the large files involved in torrenting.

Use a seedbox to download torrents

A seedbox is a high-speed server that's specifically designed for torrent downloads. Unlike regular BitTorrent downloading, your IP address isn't shared, and seedboxes usually deliver much faster download speeds (most are on 100Mbps lines), although you'll need to download files from the seedbox to your home PC afterwards. You can manage your torrents through a uTorrent web interface so you don't need to have a BitTorrent program running on your PC and giving the game away.

All these benefits make seedboxes a great solution if you want to torrent content completely anonymously. Prices vary, but ExtremeSeed (extremeseed.com) offers shared seeders for from $20 (£13) a month, and dedicated servers for from $65 (£42.50) a month. You should find a shared seedbox sufficient to begin with, unless you're an extremely heavy downloader.

Use browser tools to disguise downloads

There are plenty of browser add-ons that can hide and disguise your online activity. One of the best is anonymoX (www.anonymox.net), a proxy tool for Firefox and Chrome that routes your browsing through its own servers, concealing your IP address. It's free to use if you're willing to put up with ads, but if not, you can upgrade to the Premium version for €4.50 (£3.33) per month, which gives you unlimited traffic and faster downloads, too.

We're also big fans of ZenMate (zenmate.com), which is available for Firefox, Chrome and Opera. It encrypts and protects your browser traffic, and hides your identity. ZenMate is free, but if you want unlimited monthly traffic and additional features, you could try one of the paid-for plans. These cost from $4.99 (£3.26) a month if you buy a yearly subscription.

FoxyProxy (getfoxyproxy.org) isn't just a clever name, it's also a popular Firefox add-on that's now available for Chrome and Internet Explorer. Although there are free Basic and Standard versions, it's best to sign up to the 'Plus VPN and proxy' service which costs $7.49 (£4.90) a month.

Download files privately from Usenet

Long before BitTorrent first offered a simple way to download content from other users, there was Usenet. First created in 1979, it remains a popular, fast and private way of sharing files over the internet. To use it, you'll first need to sign up to a Usenet service so you can access the newsgroups where files are shared. Subscription prices vary depending on which service you go for. EasyNews (easynews.com) is one of the better options and will set you back from $9.98 (£6.50) a month. However, this only gets you 20GB of bandwidth. Other plans available each offer a 14-day free trial, so you can try before you buy (you'll need to register a payment method beforehand, but you can cancel this before you're charged).

ON YOUR PHONE OR TABLET

Use a VPN for iOS or Android

Many VPNs that are available for your PC also come in app form, so you can browse the web and download files anonymously on your mobile devices. TunnelBear (www.tunnelbear.com) is available for Android and iOS and is very easy to use on both platforms. It's free, although you only get 500MB of data month, so if you need more, you'll have to upgrade via an in-app purchase.

CyberGhost (www.cyberghostvpn.com) is also available for both Android and iOS, but you'll need to be a paid Premium user to use it on your iPhone or iPad. You can also try Hola (hola.org) and Hideman (www.hideman.net) which both offer free and highly rated VPNs for mobile devices.

Hide and encrypt mobile downloads

You can keep downloaded files private on your phone or tablet using the excellent free app Keeper (keepersecurity.com). It's available for iPhone and iPad, Android, BlackBerry and Windows Phone – just go to the Keeper website on your device and click Get Keeper Now, to be routed to the relevant app store. See our Mini Workshop below to find out how to hide downloads using Keeper.

The Vault on iOS (bit.ly/vault365) is also good for securing content on your iPhone or iPad. It's free, but there are in-app purchases for additional features, such as Hidden Folders and SecureShare.

Android users should consider AppLock (bit.ly/applock365), which as well as locking apps can hide any pictures and videos you download; or Folder Lock (bit.ly/folder365), which lets you password-protect specific files and folders.

Hide apps you've downloaded

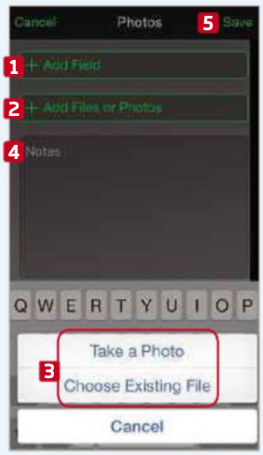
If you've downloaded some apps to your iPhone or iPad that you'd rather keep to yourself, you can conceal their presence using the iOS 8 Family Sharing feature. Set it up by going to Settings, iCloud, 'Set up Family Sharing' on your device.

To hide apps in the future, open the App Store app, tap Updates then tap the Purchased button. Tap 'My Purchases', then swipe left and tap Hide.

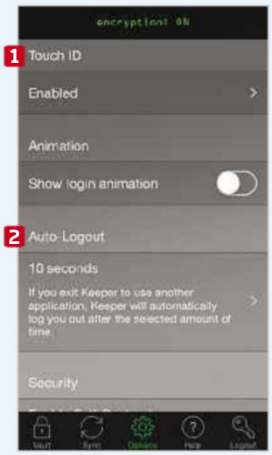
For Android, you can either lock apps using the aforementioned AppLock or hide them using the excellent Disable Bloatware – Hide Apps (bit.ly/disable365) until you're ready to use them again.

MINI WORKSHOP | Use Keeper to hide downloads on your tablet

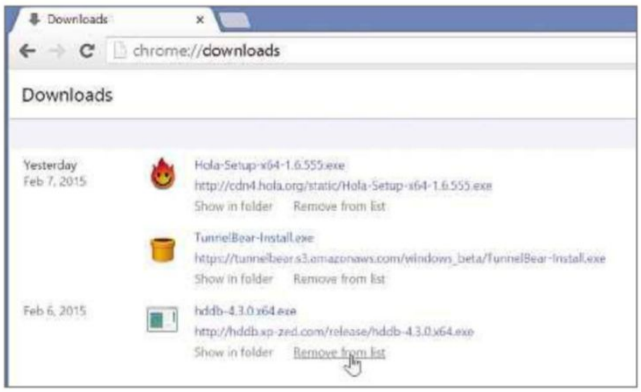
1 Install Keeper, sign up with your email address and enter a master password to keep everything secure. Once you've logged in, click the plus sign top-right to create a new record. Give the new folder a name, **1** then enter a login and password. **2** Tap the dice **3** to generate a secure password.



2 Add Field **1** lets you add a custom field, such as an account number. Tap 'Add Files or Photos' **2** to choose contents to add to the folder. You can take a photo or choose an existing file. **3** Add any notes if required, **4** then tap Save **5** The folder will be accessible from the records and files screens.



3 Options lets you change the look of the app and enable or disable Touch ID, Apple's fingerprint scanner. **1** Keeper is more secure without this option, but it's there to use if you want it. You can configure auto-logout times **2** and security features such as self-destruct, which erases secured files after five failed login attempts.



Clear all record of your downloads

Whenever you download a file, your browser stores the details in its Downloads list, which anyone who uses your computer can easily access. If you want to keep your downloads private, you can clear this list so that no-one knows what files you've been downloading. In Firefox, go to Tools, Downloads, right-click a download and select Clear List. In Chrome, open the Downloads page (chrome://downloads) and click Clear All (you can also open the list by pressing Ctrl+J).

If you think clearing your entire Downloads list might look suspicious, you can just delete selected items instead. In Firefox, right-click a download and select 'Remove from History'. In Chrome, click the 'Remove from List' link beneath the download.

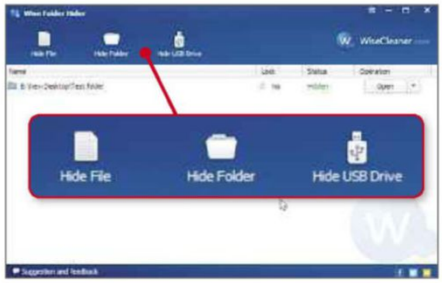
Hide downloads from your browser

Although you can clear downloads from the list, you need to remember to do so. For that reason it might be better to tell your browser not to remember them in the first place. You can do this by using private browsing mode. In Firefox, open the menu and select New Private Window. In Chrome, open the menu and select New Incognito Window. When you download something it will appear under Downloads as normal. However, when you close the private browsing window your browser will conveniently forget it ever downloaded anything during the session.

Hide your Downloads folder

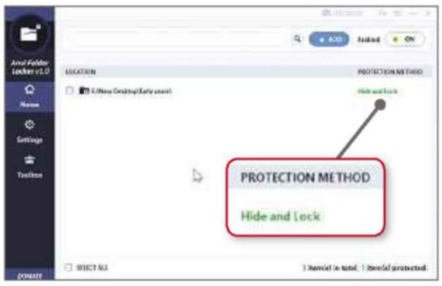
Wise Folder Hider (bit.ly/wisefolder365) can hide everything you download from prying eyes. Create a master password, then either drag a folder to the program window, choose the Hide Folder option on the toolbar or right-click a folder and choose 'Hide folder with Wise Folder Hider'. The main catch to hiding your Downloads folder is that your browser will only be able to download content to it when the folder isn't hidden. In other words, you'll need to unhide the folder before downloading and then remember to hide it again afterwards (just closing Wise Folder Hider does that for you). If you download a file when the folder is still hidden, Windows will create a new (visible) Downloads folder and save the item there, so you'll need to hide that one too!

You should also remember that, although the folder will be invisible, all your downloads will still appear in your browser's downloads list until you clear it, unless you use private browsing mode (see previous tips).



Lock specific download folders

The new program Anvi Folder Locker (www.anvisoft.com) works in the same way as Wise Folder Hider and can be used to hide your Downloads folder and any other folders you download files to. However it also offers some additional



options that may prove useful. You can lock a folder, make it read-only (so no-one can change the contents), hide *and* lock it, and password-protect it. Like Wise Folder Hider, Anvi Folder Locker uses a master password, so no-one can access your folders or make changes to the settings, which makes it ideal for preventing people from seeing what you've downloaded.

Sandbox your downloads

When you sandbox programs, using a tool such as Sandboxie (www.sandboxie.com), it prevents them from interfering with Windows, so if you download a dodgy program infected with malware, it won't be able to harm your PC. Another benefit to this is that if you run your browser in a sandbox, all the files you download – programs, movies, games and so on – are sandboxed too. You can open and use them as normal, but when you empty the sandbox, all trace of their existence will be wiped.

You can also use VirtualBox (www.virtualbox.org) to set up a virtualised operating system on your PC, and download files there.

Delete old downloads automatically

Cyber-D Autodelete (bit.ly/autodelete365) is a useful free tool that can be set to automatically clear the contents of your Downloads folder after a set number of days. This saves you needing to remember to do so manually, in case a nosy parker wants to know what you've been downloading. To use the program, click the Add Folder button and browse to your Downloads folder. Click the Date Filters tab and set how long you want to keep downloads

for before deleting them. The Delete Options tab let you choose how to remove the downloads – you can send them to your Recycle Bin, or securely overwrite them to delete them for good.

Rename your torrents

Files that you download via BitTorrent often have names that betray their illegal origins, such as the name of the group that sourced and shared them. You can rename these downloads to make them look less suspicious. You can do this manually of course (select a file, press F2 and enter a new name), but if you have a lot of files to retitle, Filebot (www.filebot.net) is a much better option. This free program can automatically rename films and TV shows using information pulled from various online databases, including IMDb and TV.com, so they look more like official downloads.

ON SOMEONE ELSE'S PC

Download files to a USB stick

If you're downloading on a PC other than your own, such as at a friend's house or in a hotel, you can keep what you grab from the web private by downloading files to a USB memory stick instead, rather than the hard drive. Use the browser's private-browsing mode to make sure there's no trace of what you've downloaded.

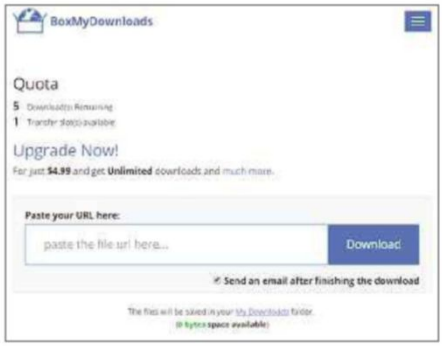
Use Tails

Tails (tails.boum.org), which stands for The Amnesiac Incognito Live System, is a live Linux-based operating system that you can boot into and use on any computer. It's optimised for anonymity, doesn't leave any traces behind and comes with a collection of privacy and encryption tools (infamous NSA whistle-blower Edward Snowden is a big fan). If you're planning to do a lot of downloading away from home, it's definitely worth taking Tails with you.

You can run Tails from a DVD, but obviously any files you download can't be saved to that, so you should run the operating system from a USB stick or SD card instead.

Download files directly to Dropbox

BoxMyDownloads (www.boxmydownloads.com) lets you download files directly from the web to your Dropbox account. Sign into the site with your Dropbox login details to create a My Downloads folder in your Dropbox, then paste the URL of the file you want to load into the box provided and click Download. The free BoxMyDownloads option limits you to five downloads a day, but if you upgrade for $4.99 (£3.27) per month, there are no limits to the number of files you can download. ■



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Organise your programs on virtual Desktops

Windows 10 will let you organise your programs across several virtual Desktops. Linux and Mac users already have this option, but if you want it on your PC now, **Andy Shaw** has tested six free alternatives that run on any version of Windows, from XP to 8.1

Dexpot | dexpot.de | ★★★★★

FEATURES ★★★★★ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★ EASE OF USE ★★★★☆

WebUser GOLD AWARD

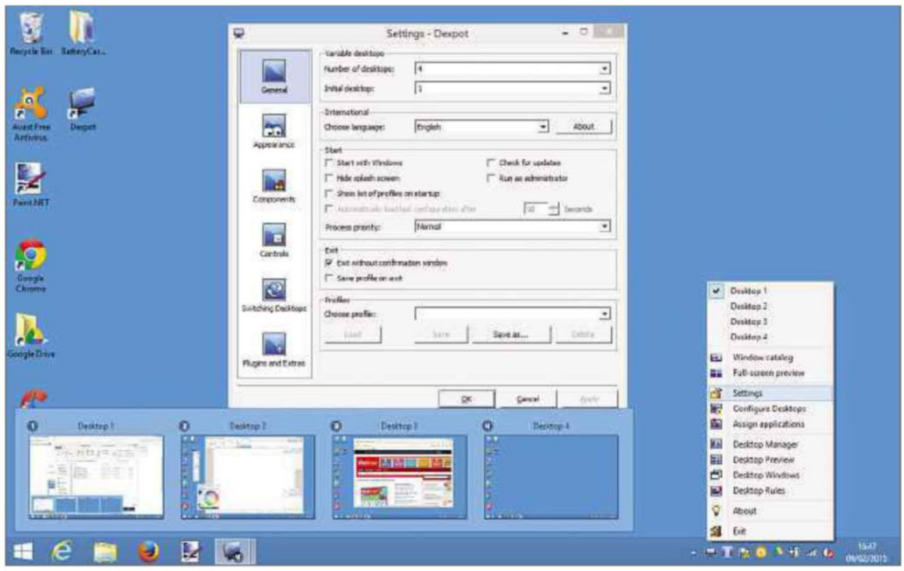
What we liked:

Dexpot can be installed on your PC or run as a portable program. In both cases, running it will add an icon to your taskbar. Each new virtual Desktop you launch stacks another tile behind the main taskbar icon, just as if you were opening more instances of the program. Hover over the taskbar icon and thumbnails of your Desktops appear, so you can see at a glance what's happening on each one.

The software also installs an icon in the notification area. Right-clicking it provides access to a multitude of settings and tweaks that can be applied to one or all of the Desktops. You can have different screen resolutions and wallpapers, and do clever things such as turn off the taskbar and remove Desktop icons. You can also click the Start-Up tab to automatically have certain tools available in specific Desktops when you launch them.

There are also sophisticated tools that let you add rules, so if a specific event occurs (such as the launching of a particular program) you can set Dexpot to perform a task (such as moving it to a particular Desktop).

Dexpot can run up to 20 different Desktops if your PC can handle them, though it defaults to a more manageable four. Specific applications can be permanently pinned to one particular Desktop, so you always know where they are.



The range of Dexpot's tools sounds overwhelming, but most of the options are tucked away in menus so the basic program is kept easy to use.

How it can be improved:

The installable version bundles a PUP (Potentially Unwanted Program) with its installer. Dexpot is very upfront about it and it's easy to deselect to avoid, but it could still catch out the unwary.

OUR VERDICT

Dexpot is by far the most sophisticated program reviewed here. However, it manages to provide a huge range of tools without being over-complicated

Desktops

bit.ly/desktops365 | ★★★★☆

FEATURES ★★☆☆☆ PERFORMANCE ★★★★★ EASE OF USE ★★★★★

What we liked:

Sysinternals Desktops is almost the opposite of Dexpot, because it's tiny and has very limited features. The program is completely portable, so you can't install it, even if you want to. When you first launch Desktops, you can choose whether you want the software to start every time you launch Windows, and select a keyboard shortcut to switch between its four Desktops. You can also click the icon in the notification area to see a preview of all your Desktops and choose between them.

The Desktops are only created when you start using them, so the first time you switch to a new Desktop, the screen will go blank. However, once it's launched you can seamlessly flick between the Desktops you're using. There's also an option you can access from the icon in the notification area that shows you thumbnail previews of the Desktops, which you can click to select.

How it can be improved:

We found the program behaved a little strangely in Windows 8.1: the Start button only worked in the first Desktop, though we could open it on the second with the Windows key. However, anything launched from it would then open back on Desktop 1.

OUR VERDICT

Desktops is a bit limited and doesn't have anything like the number of tools that Dexpot has. However, it's very compact and if all you want to do is run programs in virtual Desktops, it's an excellent option.

Virtual Dimension

virt-dimension.sourceforge.net | ★★★★☆

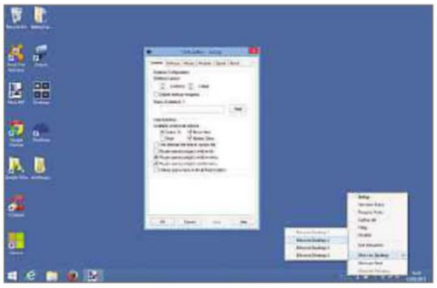
FEATURES ★★★☆☆ PERFORMANCE ★★★★☆ EASE OF USE ★★★★★

What we liked:

Virtual Dimension doesn't appear to have been updated since 2005 but it's still surprisingly capable. It isn't as slick as even the least sophisticated rivals we've reviewed here, but what it lacks in flashy tricks it makes up for in useful, useable tools.

Rather than displaying a full preview thumbnail of each Desktop, like Dexpot and Desktops do, it uses a small box containing program icons. Although this doesn't look as attractive, it's much clearer at showing which programs are open in each Desktop.

It also means that you can perform clever functions such as dragging individual program icons from one Desktop thumbnail to another, which makes moving them around simpler than in most of the other virtual-Desktop software. You can also right-click the program icons to choose special options, such as making the calculator appear on all your Desktops.



How it can be improved:

Virtual Dimension starts numbering Desktops at zero, rather than one, which we found confusing.

OUR VERDICT

This is an old program and it certainly looks it. However, it works surprisingly well, and some aspects of the old-fashioned interface, such as using program icons instead of full preview thumbnails, actually provide it with extra tools that are missing from the other, newer programs.

BEST OF THE REST

VirtuaWin

virtuawin.sourceforge.net

VirtuaWin offers up to nine Desktops and has a good selection of tools, with add-ons that provide access to even more. Navigation between Desktops is simple and effective: hold down Alt+Control and press the cursor keys to rotate through them. However, configuration is made complex because although the program uses a straight-forward Windows menu system, there's too much text and too many tick boxes.

WindowsPager

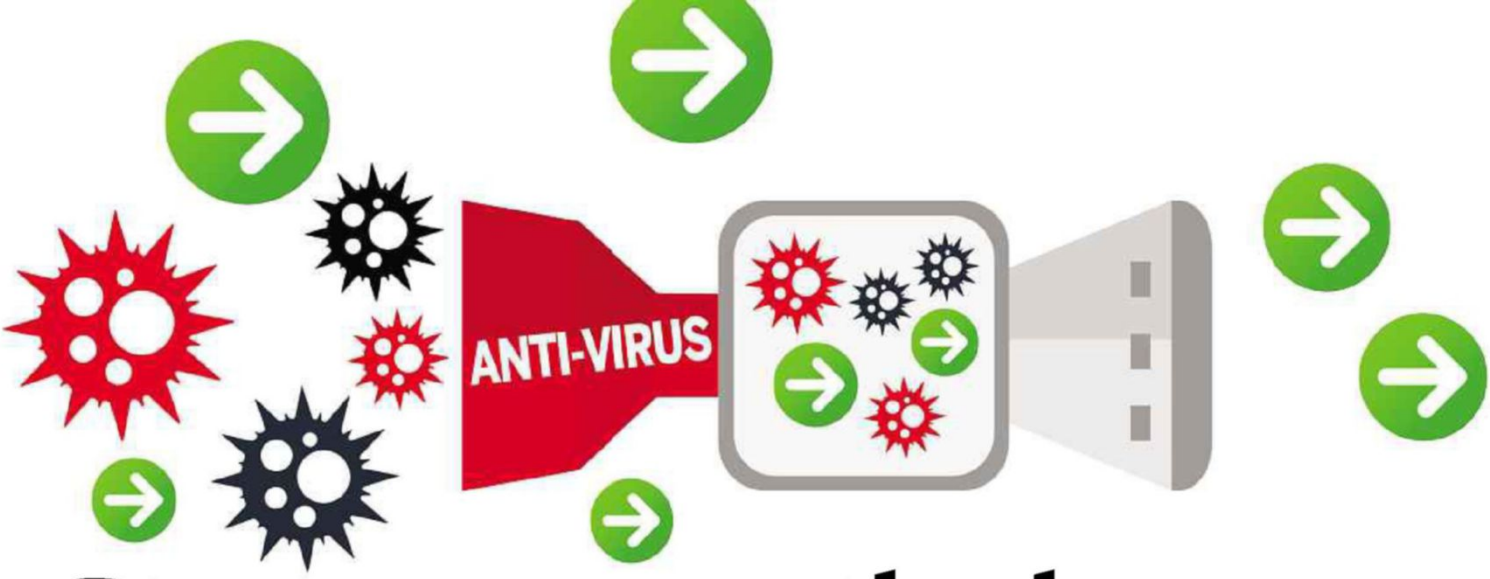
windowspager.sourceforge.net

WindowsPager worked fine when we tested it in Windows 7, but it won't work with Windows 8 or above. Thumbnails for its four Desktops integrate into the taskbar, sitting to the left of the notification area. Rather cleverly, you can move programs from one Desktop to another by right-clicking the relevant title bar. It was only the lack of Windows 8 support that stopped this simple program getting an award.

nSpaces

www.bytesignals.com/nspaces

Switching to a new nSpaces Desktop takes you to a blank screen with only the Start button still present – all your Desktop icons and pinned Taskbar programs are left behind. However, you can have a different wallpaper on each Desktop to easily tell them apart. We found that nSpaces worked in Windows 8, but not particularly well. It also relies on keyboard shortcuts to perform tasks, which you have to learn in order to use the program efficiently.



Stop your anti-virus blocking safe software

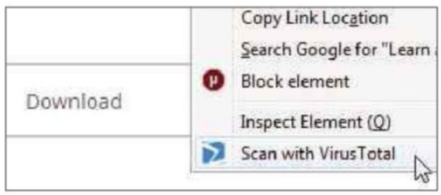
Over-vigilant security software sometimes flags harmless files as malware. **Jonathan Parkyn** explains what you can do to identify, prevent and report false positives

Scan the suspicious file using VirusTotal

No security software is 100-per-cent foolproof, so a second opinion is always useful, particularly if you're not sure whether a download is genuinely malicious or not. VirusTotal (www.virustotal.com) doesn't just give you a second opinion, it gives you more than 50, by running your file through multiple anti-virus engines, including big names such as Symantec, Bitdefender, Sophos, McAfee and Kaspersky. Best of all, this simple but powerful online tool is completely free and you don't need to register with VirusTotal to use it.

Click the Choose File button to upload a suspicious file from your PC, then click 'Scan it' to see the results. Currently, the only limitation on a file is its size, which needs to be smaller than 128MB.

If you use Firefox, you can install



VirusTotal's add-on VTzilla (bit.ly/vtzilla365) to analyse downloads from your browser before they get anywhere near your PC. Just right-click a download link and choose 'Scan with VirusTotal' or click the toolbar button to scan the current page for malware.

Chrome users can install VTchromizer (bit.ly/vtchromizer365), which works in the same way.

Check a program using Should I Remove It

If a program you've already installed is causing problems with your security software – for example, because your firewall is blocking its access to the internet – you can check it for malware using Should I Remove It (www.shouldiremoveit.com). This handy free tool scans all your installed programs and ranks them in order of how dangerous they are. Any programs flagged red represent a potential security risk and should be removed immediately.

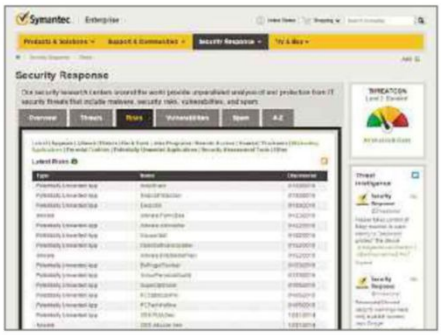
Click a program to see information about it, including its install size. The 'What is it?' button takes you to the Should I Remove It website where you'll

find a full description of the program and the number of other users who have removed it. The Uninstall button lets you remove the program from within Should I Remove It, rather than via the Windows Control Panel, which can often be very slow.

Search online threat databases

Many of the bigger security companies publish comprehensive databases of known malware that let you check your suspicious program against an up-to-date list of genuine threats. Of these, Symantec's Security Response (www.symantec.com/security_response) is one of the biggest and easiest to browse. The page splits findings into Threats, Risks and

Vulnerabilities – the Risks tab is where you'll find potentially unwanted programs (PUPs), adware and misleading applications, while Threats covers the latest Trojans, ransomware and other nasties. Each category lists entries by date, with the most recently identified at the top, but you can also browse risks and threats by clicking the A-Z tab or by typing the name of your suspicious file into the search box.



Run the suspicious download in a sandbox

A great way to test a program you're not sure about is to run it in a sandbox, which is a ring-fenced section of your hard drive where you can safely install and run applications in isolation without affecting the rest of your PC. Sandboxie (www.sandboxie.com) has been around for ages but remains the best tool of this type. It's still free, too, though you'll have to put up with a nagging message after 30 days unless you pay £14 for a licence.

Once you've installed Sandboxie, when you want to run a program you've downloaded, right-click the installation file, select Run Sandboxed and choose

DefaultBox. If you decide you no longer want the program – or anything else – in your sandbox, right-click the Sandboxie icon in the notification area and select DefaultBox, then Delete Contents to wipe the slate clean.

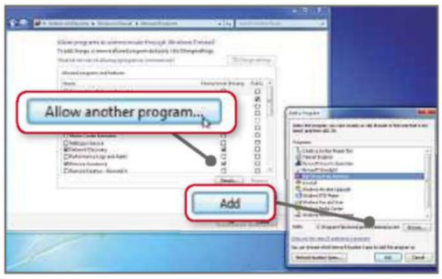
WHY DO FALSE POSITIVES OCCUR?

Most security software works by checking files and programs against a regularly updated list of known malware. The best programs also look for 'virus-like' behaviour, to protect you against malware that has not yet been officially identified. However, this can occasionally result in the security program falsely identifying a legitimate application as malware, based on behaviour that the anti-virus application deems as suspicious. A pattern of code may, for example, match the same pattern contained in a known virus signature. But however annoying or worrying false positives might be, it's worth remembering that it's better to be safe than sorry and a legitimate program blocked is preferable to malware being let through.

Tweak your security settings

If your anti-virus software has quarantined a program you've downloaded, rather than merely provided a warning, it's usually possible to unblock it. However, we wouldn't recommend doing so because if there's even a shred of doubt, you should leave the 'infected' file where it is and follow your security software provider's official procedure for querying a potential false positive (see next tip). That way, you'll know that the file has been verified by experts before you run it.

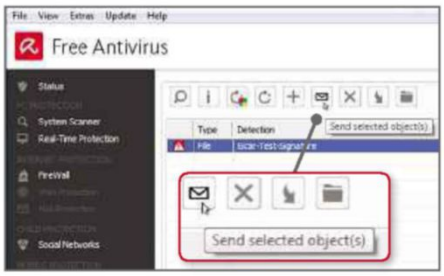
If, on the other hand, a program has installed without being flagged as unsafe by your anti-virus program but is now being blocked by your firewall, it may be safe to unblock it. First, get a second opinion on the software's safety (see 'Should I Remove It' tip). The procedure for unblocking it will depend on the firewall you're using. With Windows Firewall, for example, you need to open the Control Panel, click 'System and Security', then click 'Allow a program through Windows Firewall'. On the next screen, click 'Change settings' and put a tick by the program you want to unblock. If the program isn't listed, click 'Allow another program', then highlight the application and click Add.



Report the false positive to the security company

Security companies realise that falsely identifying malware is a pain for users and an even bigger pain for the legitimate software developers, so it's in everyone's interests to make sure wrongly blocked programs are identified and corrected as soon as possible. The best way to do this is to let your security software provider know about any programs you think have been incorrectly blocked. Some anti-virus programs allow you to do this from within the program itself – look for a 'false positive' or 'send sample' option when a program is blocked or quarantined.

Each security software company has its own reporting process. In Avira's Free Antivirus, for example, you open the management console, click Quarantine on the left, then highlight the suspicious program in the list and click the envelope icon in the top toolbar. Fill in the form and click OK to send the file to the company for analysis.



Alternatively, you can simply email the company or see if there's a form to report false positives on its website. Symantec, for example, has a form at bit.ly/symantec365, while for Kaspersky, you should visit newvirus.kaspersky.com, select False Alarm and upload the file.

Run apps on your PC

There are several ways you can enjoy your favourite Android tools and games on the big screen with less fiddly controls. **Robert Irvine** reveals the best free options

Install an Android emulator

The easiest way to enjoy your favourite Android apps and games on your Desktop is to use an emulator. The best free option is BlueStacks (www.bluestacks.com), which offers a free App Player for PC and Mac, effectively turning your computer into a tablet. When you install BlueStacks, select 'App store access' and add your Google account, and you'll be able to download Android apps from Google Play to use on your PC. Apps can be viewed in a window or full-screen and are controlled with your mouse rather than your finger. BlueStacks provides a selection of popular apps on its start screen, so you can click straight through to install them. There's also a handy option to sync apps with your mobile device.

If you don't like BlueStacks, which can be rather resource-hungry, there are several other emulators you can try. These include Andy the Android Emulator (www.andyroid.net), which recreates the mobile OS on your Desktop and offers lots of useful features, including the ability to use your phone as a controller when playing Android games on your PC. However, Andy isn't as easy to set up as BlueStacks.

We also like Genymotion (www.genymotion.com), which is designed to test apps but can also be used as a games emulator. It's much faster than

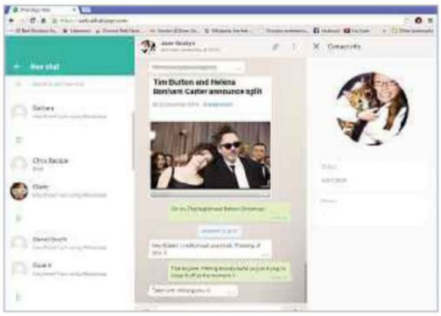
BlueStacks and Andy; can display several emulation windows at once; and even lets you copy text from your PC into Android and vice versa, although many features are limited to its paid-for version, which costs €8.25 (£6.11) per month.

Chat in WhatsApp on your PC

Last month, the incredibly popular messaging app WhatsApp launched a web version, called WhatsApp Web, which you can use to chat to friends in your Desktop browser as well as on your phone. Sadly, you can't just go straight to the website (web.whatsapp.com) and start chatting. Instead, you need to open it in Chrome, scan a QR code with your phone and launch the latest version of the WhatsApp mobile app. Tap the three-dot icon in the top-right

corner and select WhatsApp Web. Scan the QR code on the website again to connect your phone to your PC, and WhatsApp will load in your browser.

Once all that set-up palaver's over, you can start or resume a WhatsApp conversation by choosing a name in your Contacts list; share photos and other files; and record voice messages by clicking the microphone icon. WhatsApp Web also has a Desktop notifications feature that tells you when you receive a new message.



To disconnect your PC from your phone again, click the three-dot icon in WhatsApp Web and select 'Log out'. Note that messages are synced between your browser and phone, which means that sending lots of images and other large files could eat into your data limit.

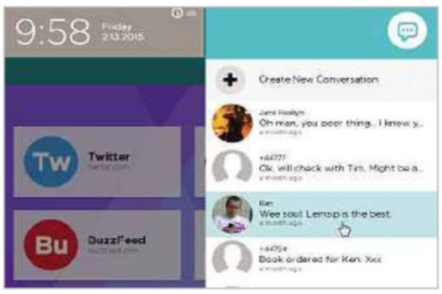
Send text messages and check calls

If you've left your Android phone charging in another room, you can use the brilliant Chrome extension Spots (bit.ly/spots365) to ensure you don't miss any calls or text messages. It syncs your browser with your phone so you can check who's been calling and texting you on your New Tab page; reply to messages from your PC; search your contacts without needing to touch your device; and get call and SMS

notifications on your Desktop.

To use Spots, you'll first need to install the Spots - Magical Launcher app (bit.ly/spotsapp337) on your phone and sign into it with your Google account. Do the same with the browser add-on to connect your PC to your phone, and your New Tab page will be transformed by an attractive if not very Android-like design. In the top-right corner, you'll see thumbnail images of the last three people who called you, and a Messages icon. Click this to view a list of all the texts you've sent and received. You can then select a message, type a reply and click Send to bypass your phone altogether.

To control your Spots notifications, click the arrow next to your name in the top-left corner, choose Settings and click Notifications. Here you can set whether to receive Desktop alerts for all calls, just missed ones or none; and for text messages, too; as well as deciding how long notifications should rotate for to get your attention.



Control your phone from your PC

To fully control virtually every aspect of your Android phone from your PC, you can't beat the amazing AirDroid (www.airdroid.com), which lets you access and manage your device either via its web interface (web.airdroid.com) or by installing the Desktop program for Windows (and Mac). AirDroid lets you transfer files, including photos and MP3s, from your computer to your phone, and vice versa; send and receive individual and group messages; view and edit your contacts; uninstall apps; and much more. The Desktop version also offers the useful ability to 'mirror' your phone on your PC, so you can use any app installed on it, although this feature requires your device to be rooted. However, you can still mirror notifications from apps so you can see, for example, when you receive a new WhatsApp message.

AirDroid is free to use, but you can upgrade to the Premium option for $1.99 (£1.29) per month for even more features, such as transferring larger files of up to 1GB, viewing remotely through your phone's camera and capturing pictures of anyone who tries to unlock your device. You need to register to use both the free and paid-for versions of AirDroid, but once you've done this it's very straightforward connecting your phone to your browser or the Desktop program.

Play Android games in your browser

Some of the most popular Android games are also available online, so you can feed your addiction from your Desktop rather than tapping your phone and getting in trouble with your boss or other half. These include Candy Crush Saga (and its Soda sequel), which you can play at King (www.king.com); the Chrome-optimised version of Angry Birds (chrome.angrybirds.com) and its accompanying extension (bit.ly/angry365), which you can download to play offline; and the MMO (massive multiplayer online) game Pocket Legends (account.spacetimestudios.com/pocketlegends) and its Chrome app (bit.ly/pocket365), which let you explore the vast fantasy world, directly from your browser, to help the Elf Queen save her kingdom.

Additionally, you'll find Facebook versions of many big titles, as well as unofficial Flash knock-offs on sites such as Miniclip (miniclip.com).

Use Android apps on your Chromebook

If you use Chrome OS, Google's App Runtime for Chrome (Beta) project (bit.ly/appruntime365) lets you install a small selection of Android apps from the Chrome Web Store. These are currently video-recording app Vine, note-taking tool Evernote, language-learning service Duolingo and reading-skills app Kids Sight Words. When it announced these Chrome OS apps last September, Google promised there'd be more to come, but so far we're still waiting!

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Ofcom

Broadband Genie's helpline is powered by Simplify Digital, the Ofcom-accredited switching service

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Take a Screen Break

It's the browser people love to hate, and it might not be around for much longer. This issue we're asking: how well do you know **Internet Explorer**?

1 Internet Explorer was first released as part of a Windows add-on pack. In which year? Clue: it celebrates a milestone anniversary this August.

2 Early versions of IE reworked code from another groundbreaking browser. What was it called?

3 True or false: The famous 'e' logo is intended to symbolise an orbit around the Earth.

4 What's the name of IE's bookmarking system, which was introduced in the first version of the browser and is still used today?

5 Which keyboard shortcut should you press in IE to return to your homepage?

6 Which version of IE controversially removed the main toolbar to create a more "streamlined" browser?

7 What feature, already available in Firefox and Opera, did IE7 introduce for viewing multiple web pages at once?

8 Which search engine is currently IE's default search provider?

9 What was the last version of IE to be compatible with Windows XP?

10 Which version of IE was bundled with Windows 98, leading to an anti-trust court case that accused Microsoft of trying to monopolise the browser market?

11 What is the name of the small icon used to represent a website that appears in IE's address bar and list of saved sites?

12 Which of these platforms *cannot* run any version of IE: Mac OS X, Android, Xbox 360 or Linux?

13 At the peak of IE's popularity in 2002 and 2003, what percentage of the browser market did it hold?

14 Which version of IE, released in 2001, has been described as "the least secure software on the planet"?

15 What is the name of Microsoft's new browser, which will be included with Windows 10 and is intended to replace IE?

CAN YOU IDENTIFY THESE VERSIONS OF INTERNET EXPLORER?

Get the answers online at www.webuser.co.uk/quiz365

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Browse the web with Vivaldi

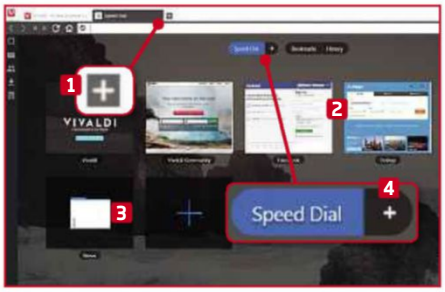
vivaldi.com

Vivaldi is a brand new browser from a team headed by the former CEO of Opera. Here's what you need to know

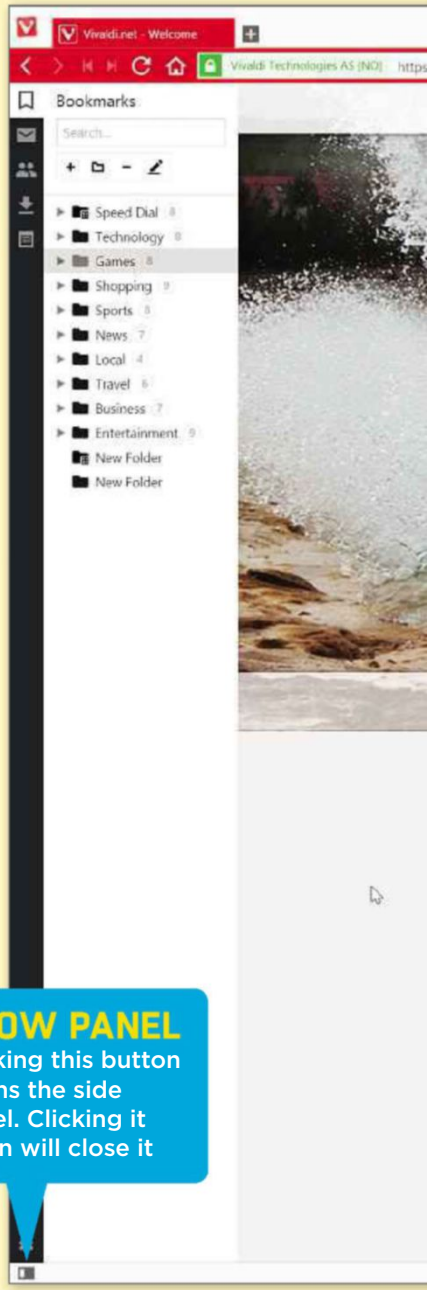
When choosing a browser, most people tend to stick with the bigger names – Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer and Opera. Vivaldi stands out from the legions of lesser-known browsers because it has a recognised pedigree, coming as it does from a team headed by Jon S. Von Tetzchner, the co-founder of Opera.

Vivaldi is a 'technical preview' rather than a finished browser, so some of its promised tools haven't yet materialised, but will be coming soon. Until that time, you may want to hold off using it as your main browser, although it's still worth taking for a spin. Vivaldi is based on Chromium, the open-source project on which Google's Chrome is built, so it's fast, stable and displays any web pages that Chrome does.

1 There are tabs along the top of the browser, 1 and separate boxes for address 2 and search. 3 Vivaldi installs Google as the default search engine. Navigation controls 4 are on the left of the address box. Despite being based on Chromium, like Google's Chrome, Vivaldi looks very different.



2 Click the plus sign 1 to open a new tab. This opens the Speed Dial page offering quick access to your favourite sites. Click a thumbnail to open its page. 2 You can reorder thumbnails by clicking and dragging, and drop them into folders. 3 Add a new Speed Dial page by clicking the plus button. 4

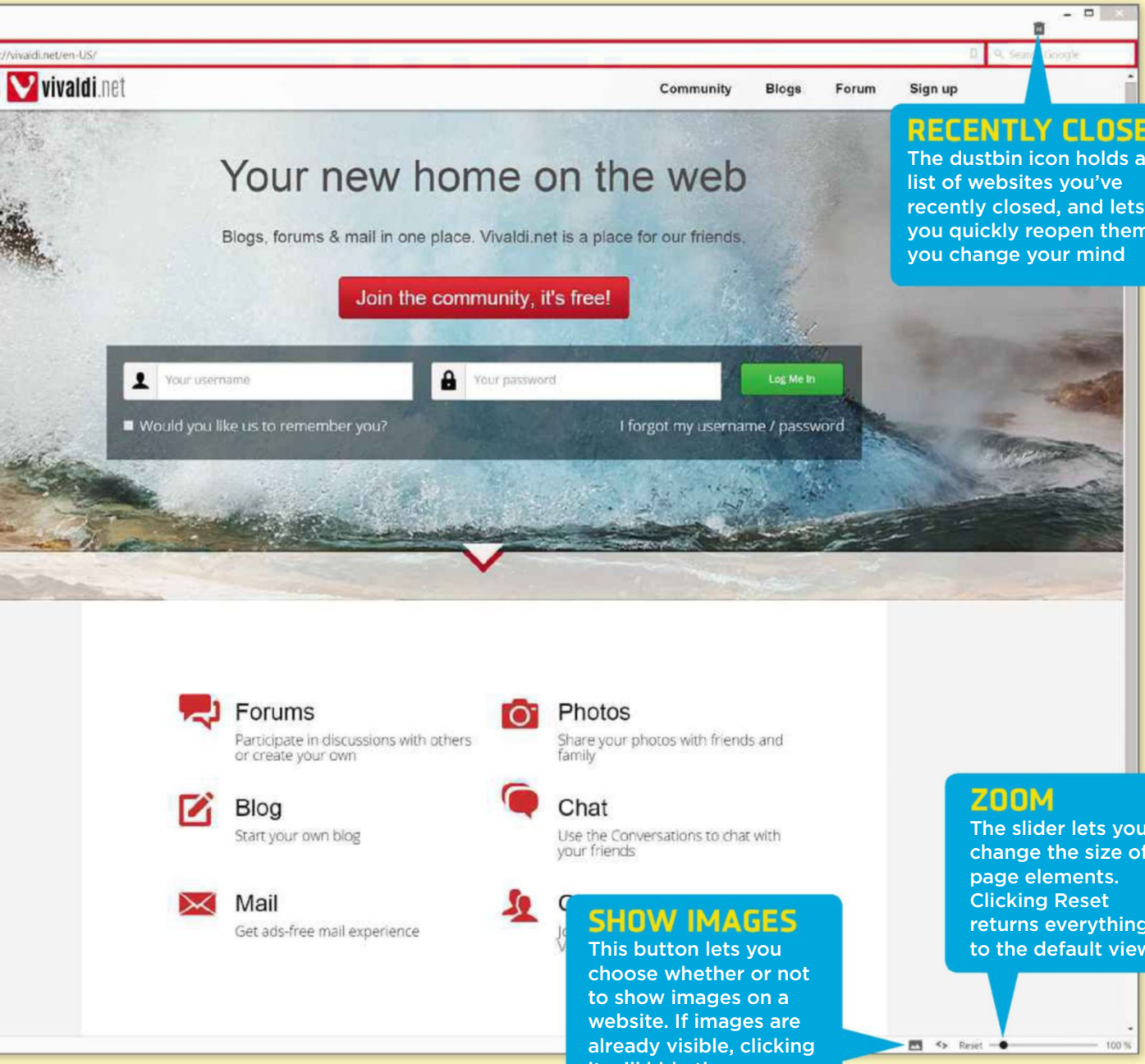


SHOW PANEL
Clicking this button opens the side panel. Clicking it again will close it

3 To add a bookmark to the Speed Dial, click the plus thumbnail (it will change to a cross) 1 and enter the URL of the site. 2 You can create a new folder here, too. 3 Click the Add button 4 and the site will be added to Speed Dial. After a few seconds, the thumbnail will be updated to show what the site looks like.

4 If you like having lots of tabs open at the same time, Vivaldi can help you manage them. Hover your mouse over any tab to see a thumbnail of the page. There's also a Tab Stacking feature. Drag and drop tabs on top of each other to create a stack. 1

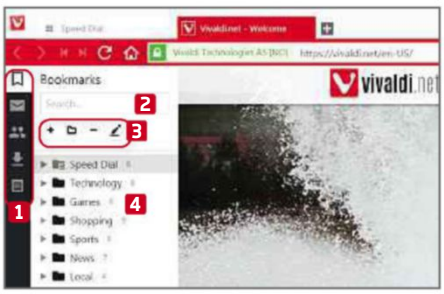
5 The Vivaldi button 1 displays the browser menu. You can access the File, Edit, View, Tools, Window and Help menus from here. 2 If you prefer to have the menu running across the top of the browser, go to View and select Toggle Menu Position. 3 You can also toggle the Panel and Status Bar on or off.



RECENTLY CLOSED
The dustbin icon holds a list of websites you've recently closed, and lets you quickly reopen them if you change your mind

ZOOM
The slider lets you change the size of page elements. Clicking Reset returns everything to the default view

SHOW IMAGES
This button lets you choose whether or not to show images on a website. If images are already visible, clicking it will hide them



6 The side panel provides quick access to Bookmarks, Vivaldi Mail (not available yet), Contacts, Downloads, and Notes. 1 You can search for bookmarks; 2 create new ones; add folders to store them in; and delete and edit them. 3 The browser comes with a selection of bookmarks organised into folders. 4

7 The Notes section provides a place to jot down information as you browse. Click the plus sign 1 to create a new note, and type or paste content into it. 2 You can add and open a web address. 3 Click the camera icon 4 to take and add a screenshot of the current site.

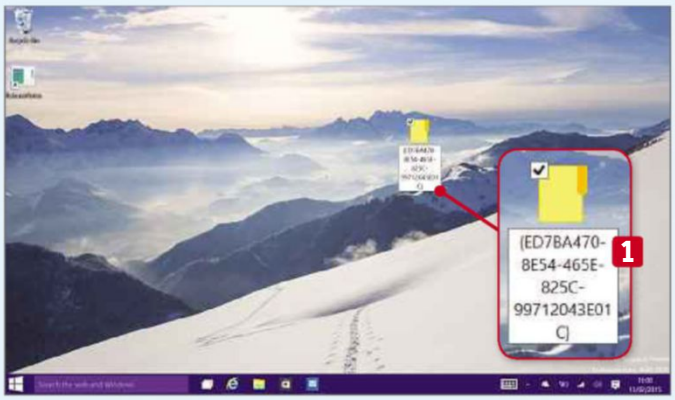
8 The cog button 1 opens the Settings. General 2 lets you make Vivaldi the default browser and set a homepage. 3 You can change how tabs, panels and menus look and work under Appearance; 4 change keyboard shortcuts under Navigation 5 and manage cookies and passwords under Privacy. 6

Discover Windows 10's secret tools

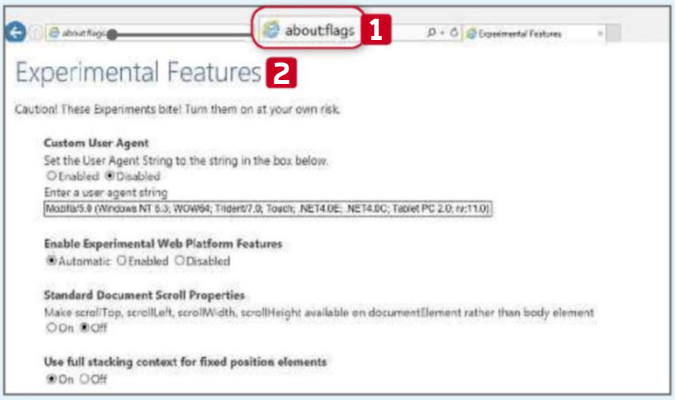
Windows 10 Technical Preview: bit.ly/windows365 | 15 mins | Windows 10

We already showed you some of Windows 10's new features in Issue 364 of *Web User* (bit.ly/webuser364). In this Workshop, we dig a little deeper to reveal some of the new operating system's less obvious tools, such as God Mode, which lets you view all the operating system's settings on one page, and settings that make Internet Explorer perform like its yet-to-be-released successor, Spartan.

Windows 10 has brought Command Prompt into the 21st century by introducing Ctrl-key shortcuts so you can select text and then copy and paste it. The console can also be dynamically resized and there are experimental settings that let you reflow text accordingly. Windows 10 also has new keyboard shortcuts that make it easier to see an overview of the applications you're running and multitask by snapping each app to a different quarter of your screen. You can also set your PC to log in automatically, so you don't have to enter your Microsoft password every time you boot up.

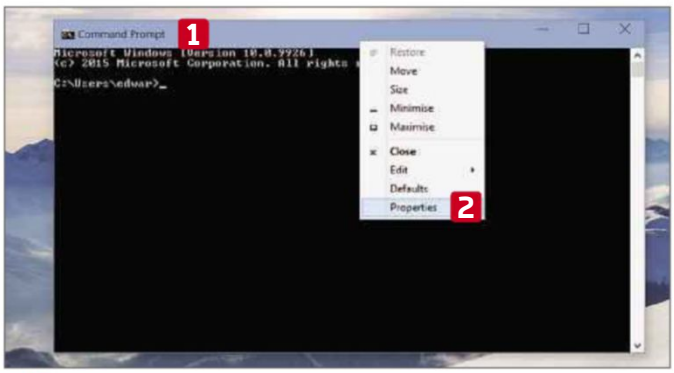


1 God Mode provides a comprehensive list of system settings on one screen. To unlock it in Windows 10 Technical Preview, create a new folder and name it `GodMode.{ED7BA470-8E54-465E-825C-99712043E01C}`. 1 God Mode's icon looks like the Control Panel's.



2 Microsoft's new browser, Spartan, isn't yet available but you can get a taste of what's to come by activating its Edge rendering engine in Internet Explorer 11. To do this, open IE11 and type `about:flags`. 1 You'll see a page titled Experimental Features. 2

3 To activate the new rendering engine, set Enable Experimental Web Platform Features to Enabled, 1 click Apply Changes 2 and restart the browser. You won't see any cosmetic differences, but enabling Edge should noticeably improve performance.

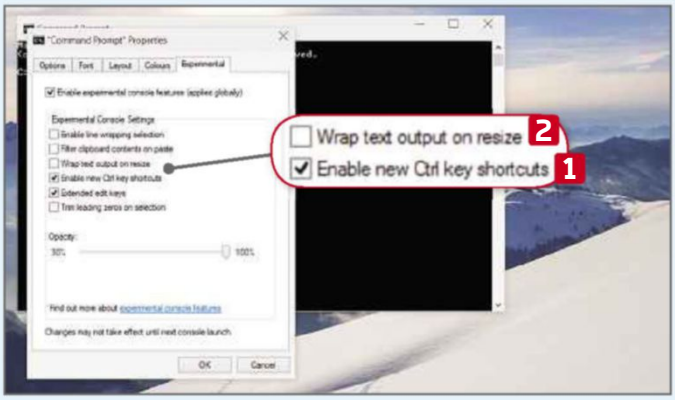


4 Windows 10 introduces a range of new and experimental features in Command Prompt, such as direct text selection and the ability to copy and paste. To enable the new features, open Command Prompt, right-click its title bar 1 and select Properties, 2 then Experimental.

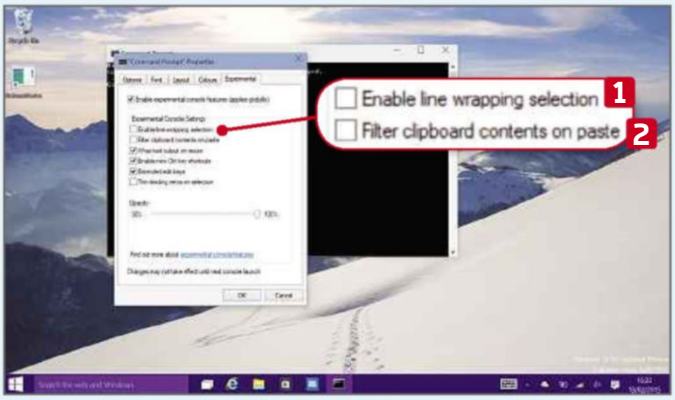
EXPERT TIP

Edward Munn says

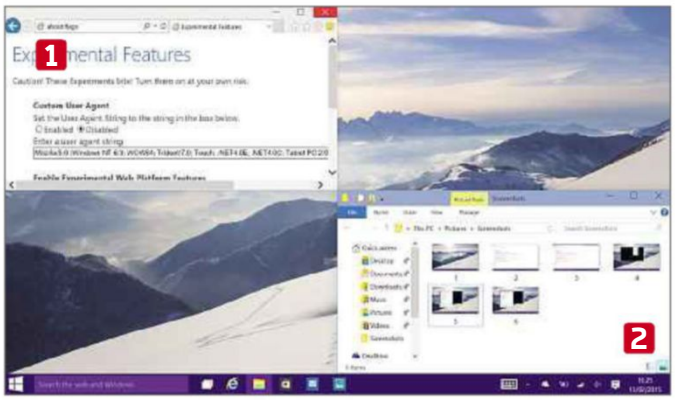
Windows 10 Technical Preview uses a Desktop watermark to show which build number you're running. If you find this irritating, you can remove it using WinAero's free Universal Watermark Disabler (bit.ly/watermark365). Run the application as an administrator, but first make sure you've backed up your personal files in case anything goes wrong.



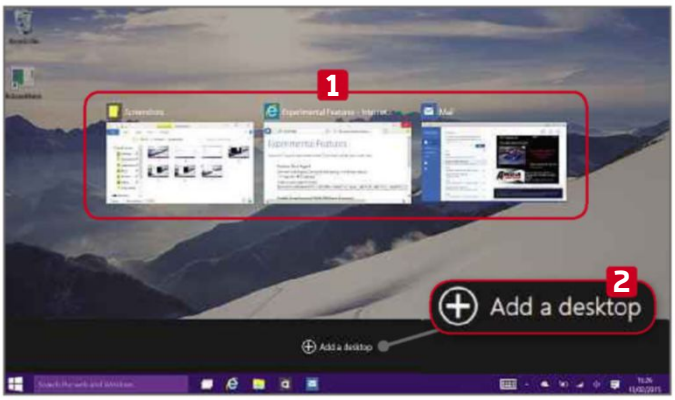
5 Keyboard shortcuts using the Ctrl key are enabled by default, 1 so you can copy and paste text using Ctrl+C and Ctrl+V, respectively. Ticking 'Wrap text output on resize' 2 means that text will be wrapped to fit the window's width if you resize Command Prompt.



6 Tick 'Enable line wrapping selection' 1 to make the selection tool automatically highlight lines of text rather than providing a free-selection rectangle. 'Filter clipboard contents on paste' 2 removes tabs and converts curved quote marks into regular ones when you paste to Command Prompt.

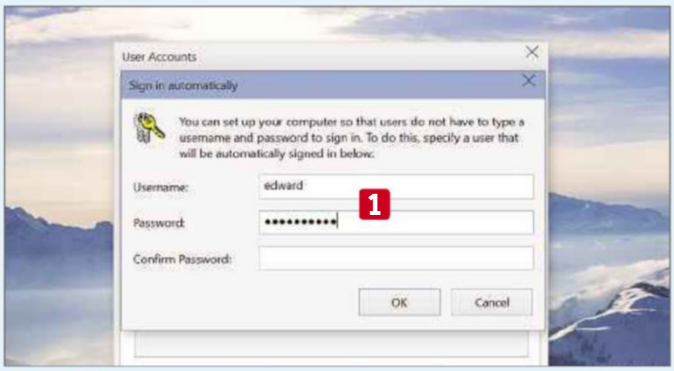


7 Windows 10 also adds some new keyboard shortcuts. As in previous versions of Windows, you can use Windows+left or Windows+right to snap windows to the side of the screen, but the new OS also lets you snap windows to corners using Windows+up 1 and Windows+down. 2



8 Press Windows+Tab to open the 'Task view', which gives an overview of all your open applications. 1 You can launch Windows 10's new virtual Desktop feature from this screen by clicking 'Add a desktop'. 2 Alternatively, press Windows+Ctrl+D from any screen.

9 If you're tired of having to sign in to your Microsoft account every time you boot it, you can disable the feature. Launch Netplwiz by typing `netplwiz` into the Start menu, selecting your account 1 and unticking 'Users must enter a username and password to use this computer'. 2



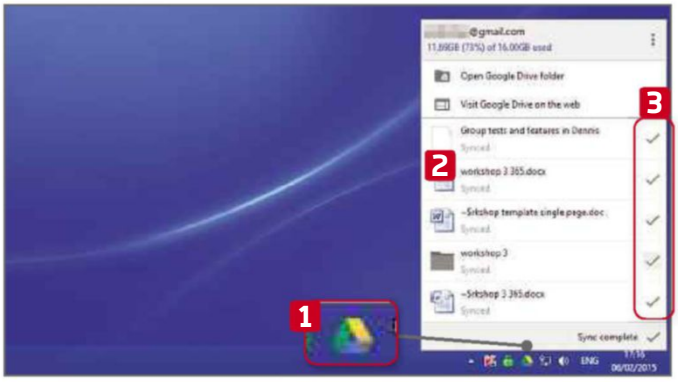
10 After clicking Apply, you'll be asked to enter your username and password to confirm your decision. 1 Next time you start your PC, it will log in to your Microsoft account automatically without asking for your password.

Sync and share files with the new Drive software

Google has updated its Drive software, which controls how your files are synced between your PC and the online storage service. There are some new tools that let you limit the bandwidth used by the service, along with new ways of sharing files and a welcome refresh of the software's interface.

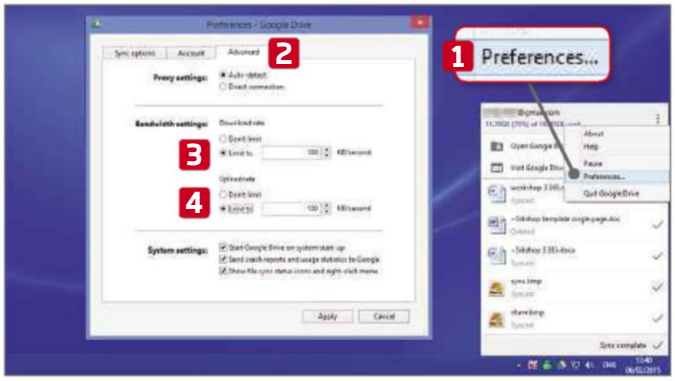
Follow our Workshop for a guide to everything that's changed.

Google Drive: bit.ly/drive365 | 5 mins | XP, Vista, 7, 8+

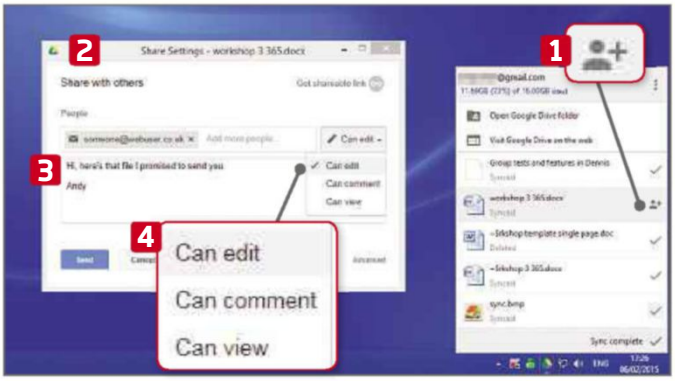


1 Click the Google Drive icon in the notification area. 1 The new software shows a list of the most recently synced files. 2 A file that has been successfully synced will have a tick by it. 3 Click a file to open the folder it's in so you can double-click to launch it.

2 If you have files syncing, you can see their progress. The icon appears as a pair of rotating blue arrows 1 and you can see how many files have been transferred and how many are still waiting. 2

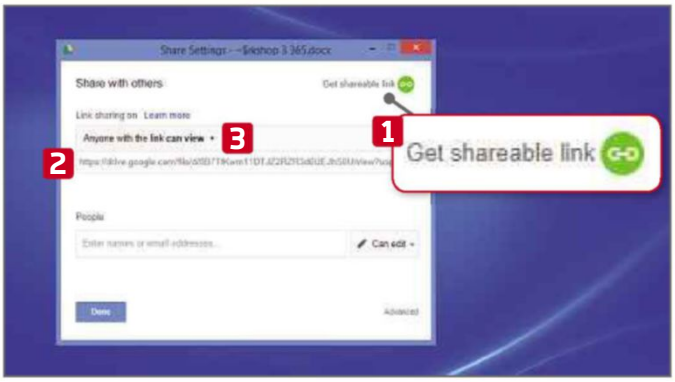


3 Click the menu button, then Preferences. 1 Click the Advanced tab 2 to set bandwidth limits for uploads and downloads. 3 This is handy when you want to reserve bandwidth for other things, such as streaming a film. Choose the appropriate 'Limit to' option and select the limit you require. 4



4 Hover your mouse over a file to see a share icon. 1 Click it to open the Share Settings, 2 where you can type an email to anyone you want to share the file with. 3 Use the drop-down menu to set whether the recipient can edit, comment on or view the file. 4

5 Click the Advanced link to select other Google users to share the file with. Enter their names or email addresses under 'Invite people' 1 and choose whether they can edit, comment or view. 2 Addresses not linked to a Google account will still need to be notified by email.

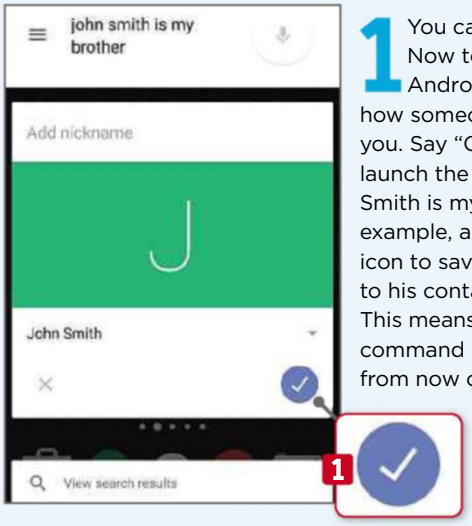


6 Alternatively, you can click 'Get shareable link'. 1 The button turns green and anyone with the link 2 will be able to view the file. Use the drop-down menu 3 to change this permission setting to specific people, and to add editing and commenting rights.

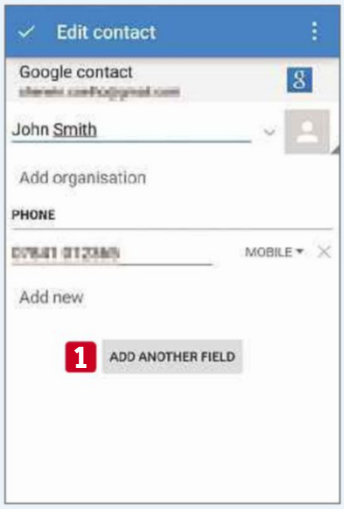
Teach your phone new names for faster dialling

Using voice-activated dialling on your smartphone is useful when you have your hands full, but it's frustrating when Google Now and Siri don't correctly interpret what you say. In this Workshop, we show you how to add nicknames and relationship details to your contacts, so that you don't need to manually search for phone numbers.

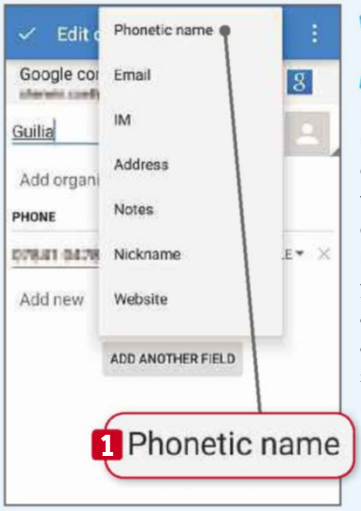
5 mins | Android, iOS



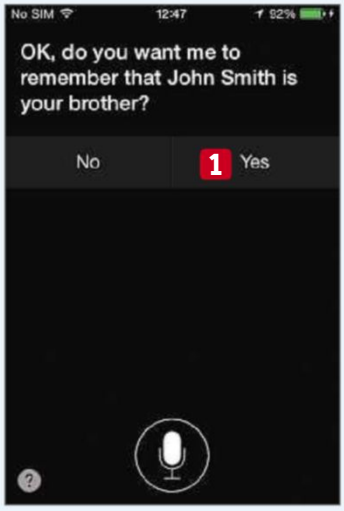
1 You can use Google Now to tell your Android smartphone how someone is related to you. Say "OK Google" to launch the app, then "John Smith is my brother", for example, and tap the tick icon to save the nickname to his contact details. 1 This means you can use the command "call my brother" from now on.



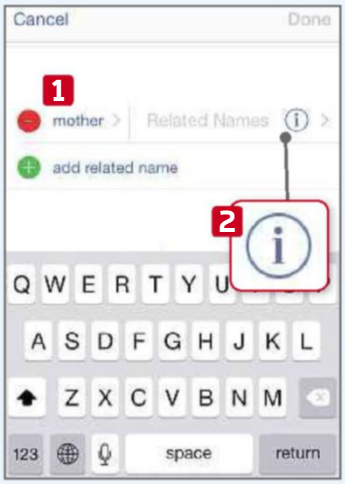
2 You can manually add nicknames by opening the Contacts app and tapping the pencil icon to edit a contact. Select Add Another Field 1 and choose Nickname (not Relationship) to add any nickname that describes the person or your relationship to them.



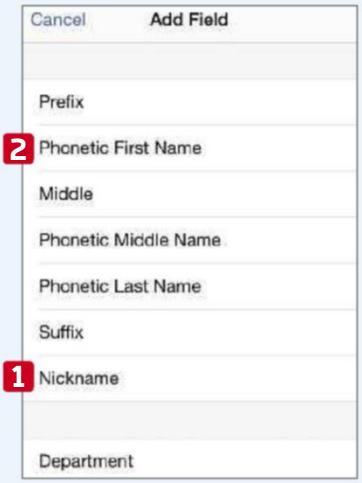
3 If someone has a name that Google Now frequently misinterprets, you can also use the 'Phonetic name' option 1 to help the app to understand it. This option differs from the nickname option in that your contact will now also appear in your contacts list according to the phonetic spelling of their name.



4 Like Google Now, Siri on an iPhone can be used to add relationships to your contacts list. Long-press the Home button and say "John Smith is my brother" and you'll be asked to confirm the relationship by saying or tapping Yes. 1



5 To manually add these relationships, open the Phone app and find your own name in your contacts list. Tap it, select Edit, scroll down and select 'add related name'. Tap 'mother' 1 if you want to choose a different label, then select the circled 'i' 2 to choose your relative.



6 To add a nickname or phonetic name, tap 'add field' and choose Nickname 1 or Phonetic First Name. 2 Like on Android, the contact will be listed under the phonetic spelling of their name if you use this option.

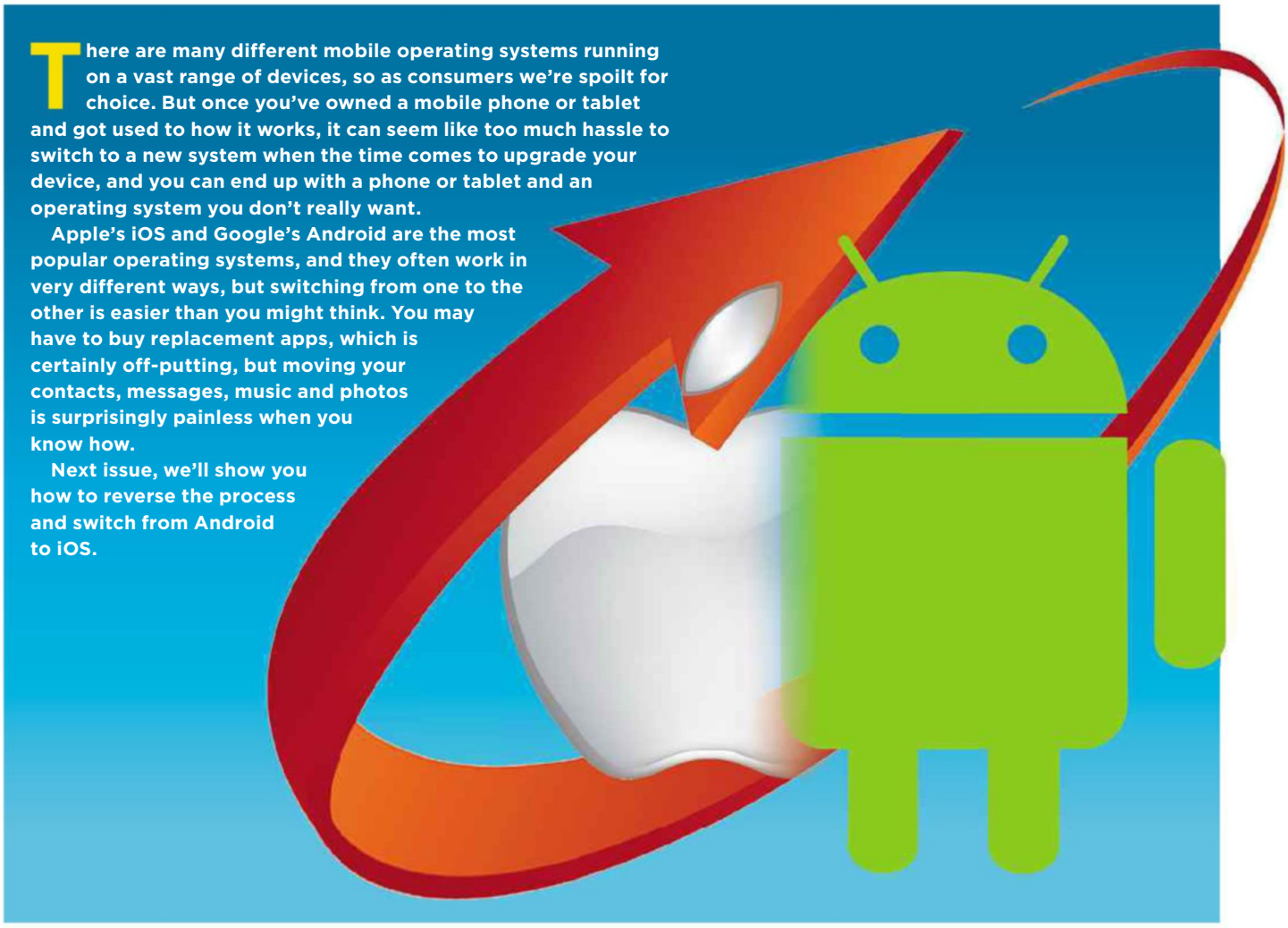
Weekend Project

Get to grips with some serious PC DIY to boost your computer's performance

How to...

Move from iOS to Android

Don't get trapped using a mobile operating system you don't want. **Wayne Williams** shows you how to switch from iOS to Android



There are many different mobile operating systems running on a vast range of devices, so as consumers we're spoilt for choice. But once you've owned a mobile phone or tablet and got used to how it works, it can seem like too much hassle to switch to a new system when the time comes to upgrade your device, and you can end up with a phone or tablet and an operating system you don't really want.

Apple's iOS and Google's Android are the most popular operating systems, and they often work in very different ways, but switching from one to the other is easier than you might think. You may have to buy replacement apps, which is certainly off-putting, but moving your contacts, messages, music and photos is surprisingly painless when you know how.

Next issue, we'll show you how to reverse the process and switch from Android to iOS.

Install your favourite apps

The Apple App Store has the largest selection of apps, but Google Play (play.google.com) also offers a huge number. According to Google, its store contains more that 1.3 million apps and, unlike iOS, Android users aren't restricted to those approved by Google. You can download apps from other stores and sources, including the developers themselves, and install them using a method called "sideloading". Getting apps from locations other than Google Play carries certain risks because they could be infected with malware or just not be any good, so you should exercise caution when doing so.

To sideload apps, you need to turn the feature on. Go to Settings, Security and tick the option to allow apps from 'Unknown sources'. Connect your device to your computer using a USB cable and copy the downloaded app (in APK format) over to any folder on your device and install it from there.

Your Android phone will be connected to Google Play through your Google

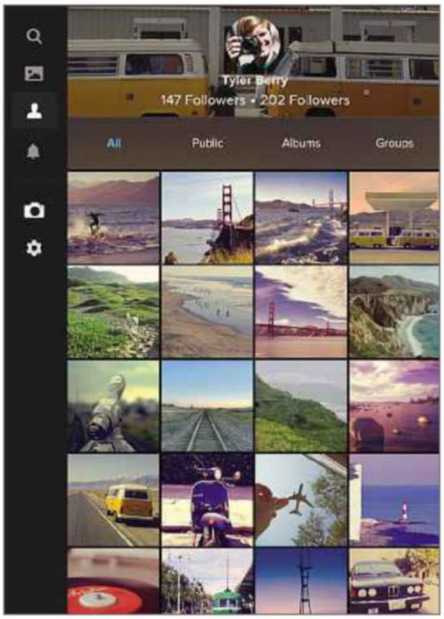
account, so you can download apps from the website directly to your device (or via the mobile app) and find out whether or not an app is compatible with it. If you're running an older version of Android, it may not be.

Start by searching Google Play for the apps you currently have on iOS. Most of them should be available, even if they are slightly different. Some apps may be paid-for on iOS but free and ad-supported on Android, but mostly the differences will be minimal.

If you can't find a particular app, it might not be available, but you can

Google's store isn't as big as Apple's, but it lets you download files from other sources

search for an alternative. There's a good chance you'll find an app that's similar and give you the features you need. You might even find apps that are better. All the most popular apps on iOS such as Facebook, Twitter, Gmail, iPlayer and BBC News are also available on Android. Bear in mind, however, that if you're going to download games that you've played on iOS, any progress or saved games will be lost and you'll have to start



Flickr stores photos online and has apps that will run on both operating systems

from the beginning on the Android version.

Transfer photos

There are lots of ways to copy the photos on your iPhone or iPad onto your new Android device. You can connect the iOS device to your PC, save the photos to your hard drive, then connect your Android device and copy the images over to it. Or you could connect both to your PC at the same time, and drag and drop photos between them. Another option is to use the Send Anywhere app (send-anywhere.com). To use it, you'll have to run the app on both your iPhone and Android device. See our Mini Workshop, below, for a short guide.

Alternatively, you can use a cloud-storage service. Google recommends you use Google+ for storing your photos, which gives you unlimited free storage for any images under 2,048 x 2,048 in size and videos shorter than 15 minutes. Unfortunately, photos taken with the iPhone 5s or iPhone 6 are 2,448 x 3,264 pixels, which will eat into your standard 15GB of storage unless you resize them first. This can be a time-consuming chore if you have a lot of pictures and you'll also lose some detail from your photos.

A better option is to use Flickr (www.flickr.com) to transfer your photos. You get 1TB of free space and there are no size restrictions, so you can easily copy photos between your devices.

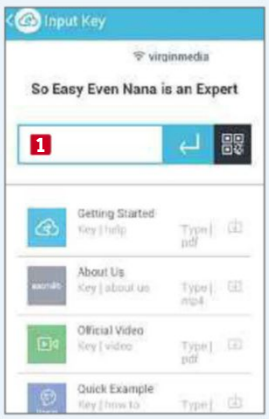
Transfer music

If your music is managed through iTunes, you probably have a back-up of your tracks on your PC, which makes copying them to Android very straightforward.

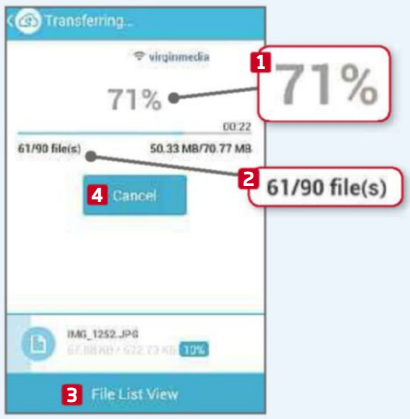
Google Play Music lets you stream music you've bought from the web

MINI WORKSHOP | Transfer photos using Send Anywhere

1 Install Send Anywhere on both iOS and Android devices. Open the app in iOS and tap the Send button. You have to grant the app permission to access your photos or it won't work. Select Photo **1** and tap the photos you want to send **2** or Select All. **3**



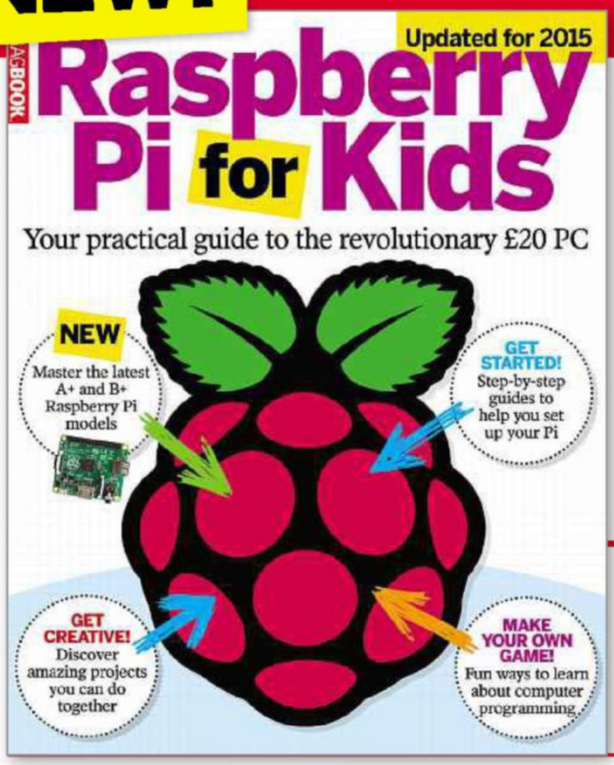
2 Tap Create Key at the bottom-right of the screen. Send Anywhere will generate a PIN, which you have 10 minutes (by default) to use. Launch the app on your Android device and tap the Receive button. Enter the PIN in the box. **1** The photos will be begin transferring between the devices.



3 The transfer process is quick and you can see the percentage completed **1** and the number of files copied. **2** There's a File List View **3** if you'd prefer to see thumbnails of the images, and you can cancel the process at any time. **4** The transferred photos will be saved to your new device in a Send Anywhere folder.

WebUser Bookstore

NEW!



RASPBERRY PI FOR KIDS

The Raspberry Pi is the incredible £20 British computer that's taking the world by storm. It's ideal for children of all ages to experiment, play games and learn valuable skills. We've updated this 148-page book for 2015 to include instructions on mastering the new Pi models (A+ and B+), helping children learn the coding skills needed to excel at the new school curriculum. We take you step by step through the basics of setting up and configuring the Pi and introduce many fun projects for families.

BUY IT NOW FROM AMAZON
at bit.ly/raspbook
(cheaper than in the shops!)

THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO GOOGLE HIDDEN TOOLS

Inside the 164-page *The Definitive Guide to Google Hidden Tools*, we lift the lid on Google's most popular tools to reveal more than 430 ways to make them even more efficient, useful and tailored to your needs. These include clever new add-ons for Chrome, amazing free apps for Android and stunning sights in Google Maps.

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THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO ANDROID

Inside this 148-page book you'll find all the free apps, expert tips and easy-to-follow Workshops you need to get the most out of your phone or tablet. You'll find buying advice, including reviews of the latest tablets and phones, and everything you need to know about taking your first steps with your new device.

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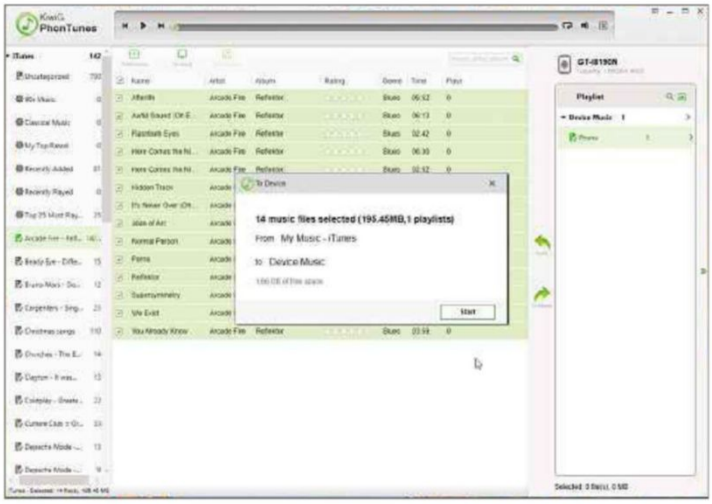


If you miss iTunes when you move to Android, try PhonTunes

Google Play Music (bit.ly/gpmusic365) lets you transfer up to 20,000 songs from your computer to Google Play, which will instantly become available on the web and your Android device.

If you want an iTunes-like option for your Android device, you could try PhonTunes (www.kiwigeeker.com). This lets you transfer music across iTunes, your PC, and iOS and Android devices.

Another option is iSyncr (www.jrtstudio.com), which is very easy to use and works via USB sync or over a wireless network. There are Lite (free) and Pro versions available. The latter costs £2.99 but lets you transfer unlimited songs and unlimited playlists.

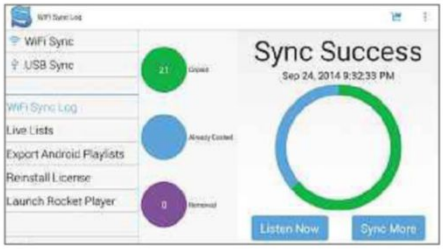
Email and messaging

If you have a Gmail account, you'll have no problems accessing your messages on either operating system. Other webmail services, such as Outlook.com and Yahoo Mail have apps available for both iOS and Android, and you will have access to your messages as soon as you sign in.

If you're keeping the same mobile number on a new Android phone, you will probably need to disable Apple's messaging service iMessage because there's a risk of SMS/MMS messages continuing to arrive on your old iPhone. Go to Settings, Messages and toggle off iMessage.

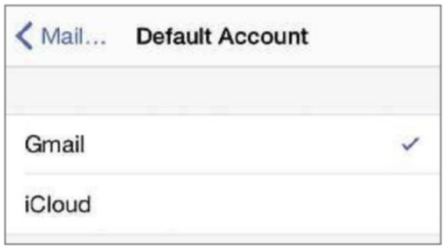
Transfer contacts

To find out where your contacts are stored in iOS, go to Settings, then select 'Mail, Contacts, Calendars'. Scroll down to Contacts and tap 'Default Account' to see the location, which is most likely to be Gmail or iCloud. If it's Gmail, then you don't need to do anything. Just sign into the same Google account on your Android phone and your contacts will all be there. If it's iCloud, you'll need to use your PC to access and export your contacts via iCloud (www.icloud.com). See our Mini Workshop, below, to find out how this is done.



iSyncr makes it easy to transfer music between devices

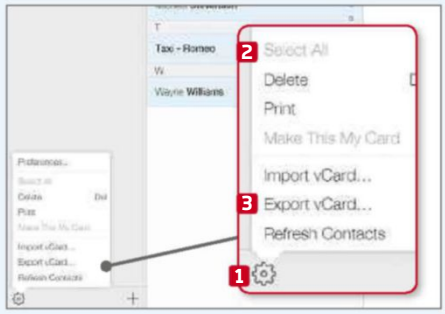
Turn off iMessage on your old iPhone in case it stops messages reaching your Android



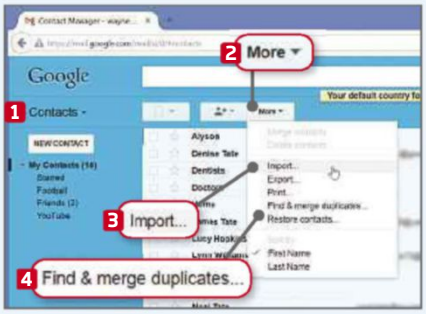
Find out which service hosts your contacts for you in Default Account settings

MINI WORKSHOP | Copy your iCloud contacts to Gmail

1 If your contacts are currently stored in iCloud, you'll need to transfer them to Gmail so they can be accessed on your Android device. Go to 'Mail, Contacts, Calendars', then go to Accounts. Open iCloud and make sure the toggle for 'Contacts' is on. 1 If it isn't, turn it on and Merge 2 your device's contacts with iCloud.



2 Open any web browser on your PC and go to www.icloud.com. Log in with your Apple ID and click Contacts. Click the cog 1 in the bottom-left corner and click Select All. 2 Click the cog again (if the window is no longer open) and select Export vCard. 3



3 Open Gmail in your browser, then click the Gmail drop-down menu top left (under the Google logo). Select Contacts, 1 click More 2 and select Import. 3 Browse for the vCard file you saved and click Import. When it's done, click More again and select 'Find and merge duplicates' 4 to remove any repeated contacts.

NEXT ISSUE **How To...** Move from Android to iOS

On sale Wednesday 11 March

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STEP 3 Tap 'Subscribe'

available on kindle fire

...via the [redacted] app

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Web User's Top Tips

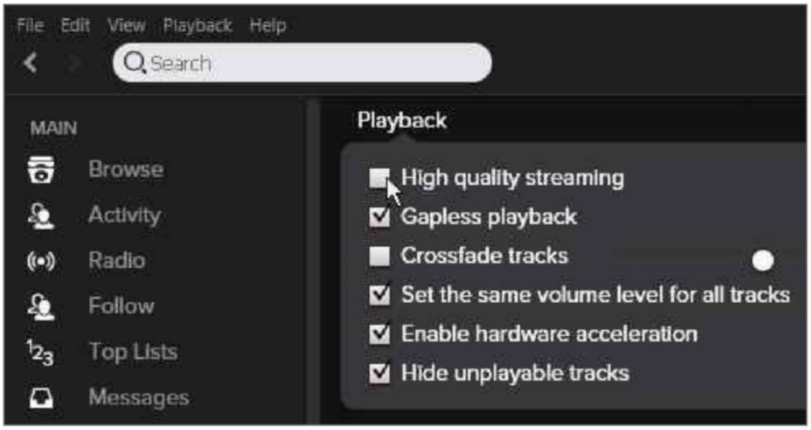
Our experts show how to improve the quality of streaming music played from the internet

TOP TIPS FOR HIGH-QUALITY MUSIC STREAMING

Subscribe to streaming services

If you want high-quality audio streaming from services such as Spotify (www.spotify.com), Deezer (www.deezer.com), Google Play Music (bit.ly/gooplay365) and others, you need to become a subscriber. Although you can listen to music for free on some services, it's streamed at a less-than-optimal quality, whereas subscribers have the option to increase the quality significantly with a quick tweak to the settings.

In Spotify, go to Edit, Preferences, scroll down to the Playback section and tick the box next to 'High quality streaming'. For Deezer, log into the website, click the gear icon next to your name and turn on the High Quality switch in the Audio section.



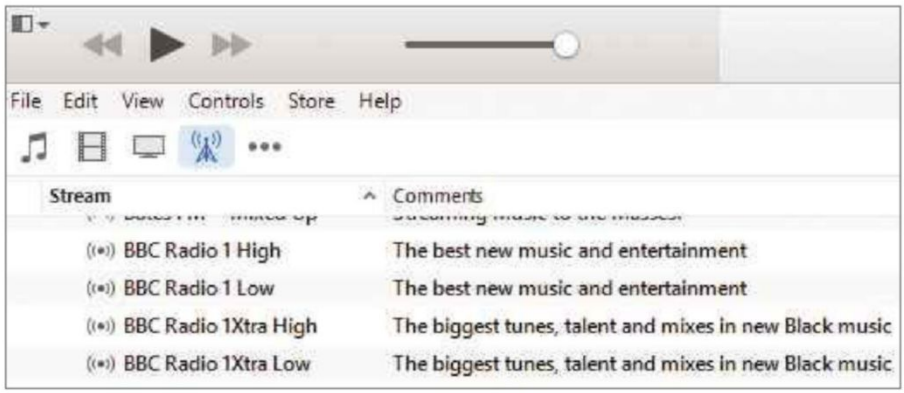
Spotify subscribers can turn on the option to have high-quality streaming

Upgrade your speakers

Most laptops have poor sound, with limited volume and quality. The best way to improve this is with external speakers or headphones. There are many to choose from and you can spend anything from a few pounds to several hundred. A stereo-speaker system with a subwoofer unit is an expensive upgrade but it will do wonders for your PC's sound. Some manufacturers, such as Logitech (www.logitech.com) and Creative (uk.creative.com), make products designed specifically for use with computers.

Get best-quality internet radio

There are hundreds of great internet radio stations that provide streaming music over the internet. Every genre you can imagine is represented including pop, jazz, classical, country, rock and many more. There are several ways you can listen to internet radio stations but one of the simplest is through iTunes. Just click 'internet radio' in the iTunes menu to see a list of music genres.



Listen to streaming radio stations in iTunes. Some are higher quality than others

The quality of the streaming music from an internet radio station varies, with some offering a bitrate of 64Kbps and others offering 128Kbps. This is simply a measure of how much data is being sent to your PC, so higher numbers mean better sound quality. Sometimes there is a clue to the quality in the radio station's name, such as BBC Radio 1 High and BBC Radio 1 Low, which means high and low quality/bitrate. Occasionally the bitrate will be included in the station name, such as A-1 Audio Channel (64k). Websites such as Internet Radio (internet-radio.com) display the bitrate and the number of listeners next to each station name. This is a great help because it lets you see the audio quality that's available before you start streaming it, and gauge whether it might be oversubscribed (which will decrease the quality).

Mobile quality

Audio-quality settings are common on phone apps that stream music

If you see words that `look like they've been typed in a typewriter`, follow the instructions and type them exactly as they appear, paying close attention to spaces and punctuation.

because there are often limits on the amount of data you can use on 3G and 4G connections. You won't stream as much data with a low bitrate, which might be better for your phone bill but lowers the sound quality.

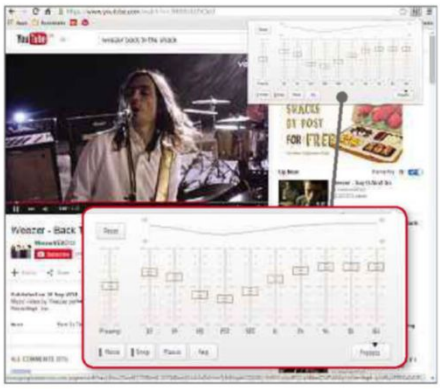
In the Spotify app on Android, for example, tap the button in the top left and select Settings. In the Music Quality section, choose Streaming. There is a choice of Normal Quality, High Quality and Extreme Quality. These correspond to 96, 160 and 320Kbps. The last (and best) is only available to subscribers.

The Deezer mobile app also has quality settings. Press the menu button and select Settings, then App Settings. In the Streaming Quality section, High Quality can be set to Wi-Fi only, because there are no data limits when using Wi-Fi and you will therefore automatically hear the best quality when you're not paying for data. You do need to be a paying subscriber, though.

Use an equaliser

An audio equaliser lets you adjust the sound quality at different frequencies, so you can fine-tune a device's sound to suit a room. AudioEQ (bit.ly/audioeq365) is a Chrome extension that adds an equaliser to the browser, so you can customise streaming audio from websites. It's somewhat limited in that it only works with HTML5 music players and doesn't have any effect on Flash audio players, but since HTML5 is becoming increasingly common, AudioEQ is a great extension to have in Chrome.

It's easy to use and provides a button at the right side of the address box which you click to open a panel of sliders controlling frequencies from 32Hz to 16kHz. Just drag them up and down to adjust the sound. The Presets button has settings for rock, pop, classical, large hall, laptop speakers and more. If you can't hear any difference, it's probably because the audio source is Flash, not HTML5.



AudioEQ adds an equaliser to Chrome to adjust web-based music streams

TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

More advanced tips for when you're feeling brave

Check your PC settings

Your PC's settings can affect sound quality but it's possible to tweak them to improve the audio output. Right-click the speaker icon in the notification area and select 'Playback devices'. A list is displayed showing speakers and possibly other devices, such as headphones.

Double-click a device on the list to open a window showing options. These vary from one computer to the next, but there is often an Enhancements or Tone Controls tab. This can include further options such as Bass Management, Virtual Surround, Room Correction, Loudness Equalisation, or perhaps just bass and treble controls. Some of these items have settings that can be adjusted, so try selecting them and clicking the Settings button, if there is one. Return to the list of playback devices and instead of double-clicking Speakers, right-click and select Configure Speakers. The options vary, but you may find stereo, quadraphonic, 5.1 surround-sound and other speaker set-ups.

Check the Windows sound properties for extra features

Configure Beats Audio

Some computers have special software for customising audio, such as Beats Audio which can be accessed in the Control Panel or by right-clicking the Beats Audio icon in the notification area. Select Listening Experience in the Beats Audio window to see pre-set options for Music, Voice and 3D Movie. Select Music to access sliders that can adjust the bass, treble, centre, space and focus. Experiment with the sliders while music is playing and select the settings that sound best. Beats Audio also has an equaliser that provides a group of sliders for adjusting the sound at frequencies from 65Hz to 12kHz. Experiment with them to get the best quality sound.

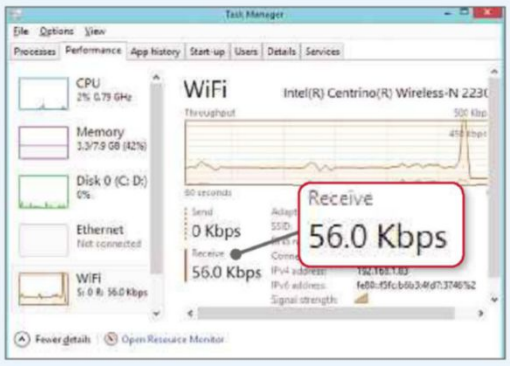
Check your connection

Audio streaming shouldn't stutter or pause, even at the highest quality setting, so if you're having problems, try checking your internet connection. Run the test at www.speedtest.net. Your download speed needs to be about 10 times the streaming rate, so if you want to stream at the top rate of 320Kbps, your download speed needs to be 3.2Mbps. This is because Windows and other apps often access the web in the background, as do phones and tablets, and there may be other people in your house who are also using the internet.

Check the bitrate

A high bitrate is the key to good-quality streaming music, but you aren't always told what the bitrate of a stream is. Stations on iTunes Radio, for example, rarely tell you the speed of what you're listening to. You might suspect that it is low if the audio quality seems poor, but you won't know for sure unless you check.

To find out the bitrate of a stream, select a radio station in iTunes and begin listening. Right-click the taskbar and select Task Manager. Select the Performance tab and the Wi-Fi or Ethernet icon in Windows 8, or the Networking tab in Windows 7. Provided that no other programs are using the internet, the Receive figure displayed is the streaming bitrate.



Judge the audio quality of streaming music by using Task Manager to display the bitrate

Ask the Expert

Roland Waddilove computer programmer and PC journalist since 1981, answers all your technical questions. Email us for help at webuser@dennis.co.uk

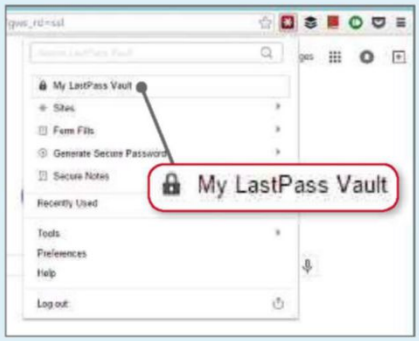
SECURITY

Does LastPass work with all passwords?

Q You have been recommending LastPass (lastpass.com) for some time and I have thought about using it, but I am not sure if the program works with sites that ask for selected characters, such as the 3rd, 4th and 8th of your password. I can't find mention of this anywhere and I don't want to download the program until I know it works with this type of password.

John Rodgers, via email

A Your passwords should be different for each login and as complex as possible – Xj75i1ZOfgQO for example. However, if you have more than a handful, it's going to be impossible to remember them. A password manager such as LastPass provides a secure place to store all your passwords and secret information, and you only need to remember one master password. LastPass will normally enter passwords for you automatically on a login page, but it won't fill them in from a drop-down menu of letter/number options, as in the example you describe. However, because the information is stored in Lastpass, you can simply open your password vault, look up a password, then type the characters.



The LastPass toolbar button provides access to a vault of all your passwords

There are other good password managers, such as Dashlane (www.dashlane.com) and RoboForm (www.roboform.com), but all the free versions have limitations. LastPass (lastpass.com) works on multiple computers with any number of passwords, for free. For $1 (about 66p) a month, you can also use it on mobile phones and tablets.

We suggest you get the free version and try it. Although it won't work automatically with the kind of password you're talking about, we don't think you'll go back to your old way of managing passwords after using it!

SECURITY

Track a stolen laptop

Q Please can you suggest some programs for tracking down my laptop if it is stolen? I'd like something that will monitor the location, even if Windows or another operating system is installed by formatting and removing all the programs. I'd also like it to show its location accurately.

PinkyRanbo, via email

A There are several products and services that do what you want. Prey (preyproject.com) is free and can be used to track the location of up to three computers. You download its tracking software and install it on your computer. If it is stolen, you visit the Prey website on another computer and set its status to stolen. As soon as the stolen computer is used, Prey reports its location, sends screengrabs and lets you lock it. However, there are limitations: the computer must be turned on and it requires an internet connection to report back. You also need to password-protect your own account and create a guest account. The theory is that the thief or receiver of the stolen laptop will switch it on, try your account, find it locked, then try the guest account. Prey cannot be seen or removed from guest accounts, and will immediately begin sending location information back to you via the website.

Prey is good but it won't do the job if someone boots up with a Windows or Linux disc and formats the hard drive, whereas Absolute Lojack (lojack.absolute.com) can survive a reformat. For £26 a year, it tracks laptops and survives hard-drive formatting. The company will also work with the authorities to recover your laptop.

GadgetTrak (gadgettrak.com) costs £14.60 a year and uses your laptop's webcam to send photos of the thief using your computer. Like Prey, however, it won't survive a reformat.

Some security software includes tracking, such as ZoneAlarm Extreme Security (www.zonealarm.co.uk), so you can combine anti-virus, firewall and anti-theft in one package.

Prey is a useful free service for tracking stolen computers, tablets and phones

SOFTWARE

Shockwave and Flash problems

Q I use Flash player to open live webcams around the world. After a disaster with Windows Update, Microsoft advised me to refresh my Windows 8.1 64-bit computer, but in the process it uninstalled all my added software. I now get the error message: 'Shockwave Flash may be busy, or it may have stopped responding. You can stop the plugin now, or you can continue to see if the plugin will complete'.

I typed this message into Google Search and it appears that it is a known problem that many other people have

suffered. I have uninstalled, reinstalled and checked the right-click settings, adjusting the local storage slider to 1MB, but no matter what I try, the message keeps appearing. Adobe has no answer and hedges the situation by telling you to transfer to another forum. Flash Player works fine on BBC video items.

David Guest, via email

A The best way to solve problems with Adobe add-on software such as Shockwave and Flash is to remove them and make a fresh start with a clean machine. Download the Flash Player uninstaller (bit.ly/unflash365) and restart the computer. Right-click all the icons at the right side of the taskbar and select Exit or Close on any that offer the option, so that nothing is using Flash. Open the Downloads folder in Explorer and run the uninstaller.

Hold down Windows+R, type `C:\Windows\system32\Macromed\Flash` and delete all the files. Repeat this with these three folders:

`C:\Windows\SysWOW64\Macromed\Flash`

`%appdata%\Adobe\Flash Player`

`%appdata%\Macromedia\Flash Player`

Restart Windows to finish.

You should also uninstall Shockwave Player, another Adobe program that's similar to Flash. Go to bit.ly/unshock365 and download the uninstaller, then run it and restart Windows afterwards.

Alternatively, you could use Chrome (www.google.com/chrome), which doesn't need an add-on to play online video, view PDFs and access other content. Or go to the Adobe website (www.adobe.com), click the menu button and follow the links to download Flash and Shockwave for Internet Explorer and Firefox. Make sure you untick the optional McAfee security software if you don't want to install it.

SECURITY

Remove Trovi.com

Q Both Internet Explorer and Firefox have somehow been infected by Trovi.com, an unpleasant kind of search engine. It probably sneaked in when I was downloading free software. I'm not completely stuck because my Opera browser hasn't been affected.

I have tried to remove Trovi from both browsers by following instructions from two different technical-support sites. A local computing firm will fix it for a charge of £70. However, they did say that a deep scan with Malwarebytes

If your browser has been hijacked, reset the homepage and search engine

Anti-Malware (www.malwarebytes.org) would do the trick. I tried this, and it found Trovi and said it was quarantined. However, it was still present in both browsers. I hope you can suggest a remedy that costs less than £70.

L Didrik Breitholtz, via email

A Free software often contains extra programs installed alongside the main one. There are usually ways to opt out and avoid installing them, but they are easy to miss. Trovi is one of those bundled extras. It isn't a virus and it does not infect computers, but some people find it annoying.

Trovi consists of multiple items and each one is removed in a different way. Here's how to remove it, and many similar programs like it, for free. Go to the Control Panel and open 'Programs and Features', then look for an item called Search Protect and double-click to uninstall it. Look for any browser toolbars in 'Programs and Features' and uninstall them. You might find one with Trovi in the name, for example.

Open the Control Panel, then Internet Options. On the General tab, replace whatever is in the 'Home page' box with your favourite start-up page, such as www.webuser.co.uk. Click the Tabs button, find 'When a new tab is opened, open' and select 'A blank page'. Click the OK buttons to close the windows.

Open Internet Explorer, click the gear icon and select 'Manage add-ons'. Select Search Providers on the left, choose the one you want to use on the right and click 'Set as default'. Select each of the others and click Remove. Click 'Toolbars and Extensions' on the left, then select 'All add-ons' under Show. Next, look through the list of items on the right for anything with Trovi in the Name or Publisher columns. Select them and click the Disable button.

In Firefox, click the menu button and select Add-ons, then Extensions on the left. Click the Remove button against Trovi and any other toolbars or add-ons you don't want. Close the add-ons tab, go to the menu and select Options. Select the General icon at the top and enter a homepage URL, such as www.webuser.co.uk. Select the Search icon at the top and choose a search engine, then remove any in the list you don't want by selecting them and clicking Remove.

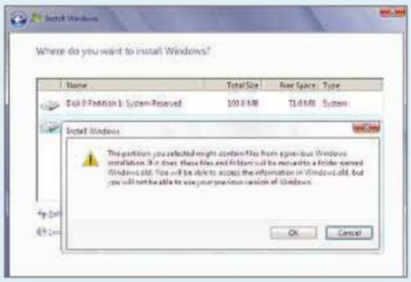
GENERAL PC

Install from a used Windows DVD

Q I built my PC four years ago using Windows XP. About 32 months ago, I installed Windows 7 Ultimate from a DVD and I intend to reinstall Windows 7 again to the same PC using the same DVD. In Issue 362, you replied to J Rosamond's similar query: "The Windows 7 DVD must be new and unused..." Since my DVD is neither new or unused, could you clarify if it will work?

Mia Carby, via email

A A licence code is supplied with Windows, either on a DVD or with the download, and it is this code, rather than the DVD itself, that can only be used once. During the



You can reinstall Windows 7 from a DVD used previously on the same PC

Windows installation, you have to enter the code to link it to your computer. You can use the same DVD on that computer any number of times, but if you try to install Windows on a different computer, the licence code will be refused because it has already been used elsewhere. The restriction is designed to stop people sharing a Windows DVD with their friends.

This fortnight Roland has been cleaning his elderly Windows XP PC in the hope of squeezing a few more years from it

Your Top Tips

Our pick of the best advice from our readers. To get help or offer it to others, visit forum.webuser.co.uk

TOP TIP

£25 winner

TABLETS

Solve video playback problems on your Kindle

I love my Kindle Fire, but I've always had problems playing videos on it. The default player is only compatible with MP4 files, so I have had to convert a lot of videos before even attempting to play them on the tablet. But even after using a variety of conversion tools, the videos often still won't play and I can't work out why.

During a moment of clarity, it occurred to me to check the Amazon app store for alternative players. A quick search showed me that I could download VLC for Fire (bit.ly/vlc365) for free, so I've tried it and it works perfectly. Because it's compatible with AVI files, I don't even need to convert many of my videos in the first place!

VLC for Fire lets you play AVI files on your Kindle tablet

Tom, via email

GENERAL PC

Use the keyboard in Windows Calculator

Enter calculations more quickly using your PC's keyboard

When using the default Calculator application in Windows, you probably instinctively use your mouse to select the numbers on the on-screen calculator. However, you can actually use the numbers and symbols on your keyboard instead, pressing Enter instead of clicking the equals sign. If you have a number pad, this is even easier.

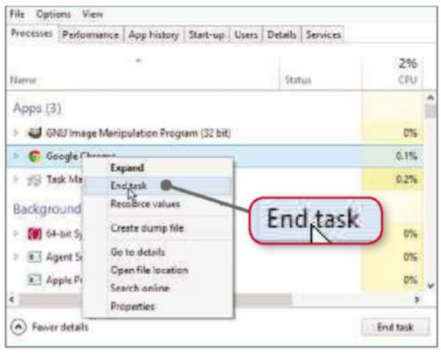
Anthony McNee, via email

SECURITY

Escaping a hijack

Google search results are mostly safe, but one recently locked my browser and a message appeared in the middle of the page demanding money to unlock it. None of the buttons or menus would close it – the browser was simply frozen. In a situation like this, don't panic and be tempted to pay the money. Just right-click the taskbar or press Ctrl+Alt+Del and select Task Manager. Find the browser on the Processes tab, right-click it and select 'End task'. As a last resort, hold down your PC's power button for about five seconds to instantly power off. Wait 10 seconds, switch the computer back on and it will be back to normal.

Liam Morris, via email



If a program freezes and is unresponsive, use 'End task' in Task Manager

WINDOWS 8

Sync Google Calendar with Windows 8

I recently bought a Windows 8 laptop and was very disappointed to discover that there's no way of using Google Calendar in conjunction with the calendar app that's built into the Start screen. Apparently it was possible at one point, but an ongoing row between Microsoft and Google means that the service is no longer supported. I found a Microsoft support page (bit.ly/support365) that suggested migrating all calendar events to Outlook.com, but I'm not prepared to do this.

Fortunately, I found a solution using an app called OneCalendar (bit.ly/onecalendar365), which lets you sign into your Google, Windows Live and Exchange calendars, then view your forthcoming events from a smart tile on the Start screen. You can choose which calendars are visible for each account and it also lets you add, remove and edit appointments from within the app.

Barry F, via email

OneCalendar lets you sync Google Calendar with the Windows 8 Start screen

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Rearrange Facebook menus

Facebook has a menu on the left-hand side of the page with various categories at the top including News Feed, Messages and Events. This top section contains your favourites. If you move lower down this section and hover your mouse over an item, such as a group you belong to, a gear appears. Click it to

bring up a menu that lets you add it to your favourites at the top.

If you hover your mouse over any of the items in the favourites section at the top (except for the News Feed) and click the gear icon, you'll see a Rearrange option on the menu. Click it, then click and drag the three-line icon to the right of each favourite to move it up or down the list. You can put your most used items at the top, sort them into alphabetical order, or whatever suits you best. Click the Done link when you have finished.

Colin Hills, via email

Click the gear to rearrange the items in Facebook's favourites list

VIDEO

Download your YouTube videos in HD

If you've uploaded videos to YouTube and no longer have the original files, you can download them from the website at any point by visiting Video Manager and clicking the drop-down menu to select Download MP4. This is handy, but it has some limitations, such as that your HD videos will be downgraded to the 480p resolution. Furthermore, if you've got a lot of videos, downloading them one at a time can be a tedious process.

Fortunately, there's an alternative option that lets you download all your files or export them to Google Drive at full quality. Visit google.com/takeout and deselect all the options except for YouTube, then click Next. You must then choose one of the three available file archive formats, before specifying whether you'd prefer to be emailed the download link or have the files exported to Google Drive. Depending on how many videos you've got, it might take Google a while to create your archive file, but you should receive an email once it's done. I found this method invaluable when downloading all my HD holiday videos to my new PC.

Arthur Thomas, via email

Google lets you export all your YouTube videos to Google Drive

BROWSERS

Copy multiple passages of text at once in Firefox

If you copy and paste a lot of text from web pages, Firefox has a great way of copying multiple passages to the clipboard at once, even non-consecutive ones. To do this, simply press and hold the Ctrl key when you use your mouse's cursor to highlight the text. This lets you copy the sections of the text you need without the bits in between that you don't want. As far as I'm aware, this feature isn't available in other browsers unless you install extensions and add-ons.

Paul, via email

Press Ctrl to highlight multiple passages at once in Firefox

WINDOWS 8

Pin the Control Panel

The main way that I get around the problem of not having a Start menu on my Windows 8.1 PC is to add tiles and shortcuts to the Start screen and Desktop. I recently discovered that you can pin items and create shortcuts for items in the Control Panel. Right-click the button in the bottom-left corner of the Desktop and select Control Panel, then set 'View by' to 'Small icons'.

If you want a shortcut to 'Programs and Features', for example, click and drag it out of the Control Panel window and drop it on the Desktop. If you want it as a tile on the Start Screen, right-click the shortcut and select 'Pin to Start'. This works for most items and the Control Panel itself can be pinned to the taskbar. When the Control Panel is open, right click the icon in the taskbar and select 'Pin this program to taskbar'.

Robert Bell, via email

SECURITY

Check QR codes are safe

As with short links, it's very difficult to know what websites QR codes link to without actually testing them. Most QR code scanners display a site's URL before you visit it, but this URL could still conceal the final domain and there's no foolproof way of knowing it's safe. I often use QR codes, so I was pleased to discover that Kaspersky has just released an app (bit.ly/qr365) that solves this problem by automatically scanning sites before directing you to them. I was worried that it might slow things down, but the app is remarkably fast and you can rest assured that the links you visit are malware-free. Since downloading Kaspersky QR Scanner, I've not used my old QR scanner once!

Dan Richardson, via email

Kaspersky QR Scanner app is available on iOS and Android devices

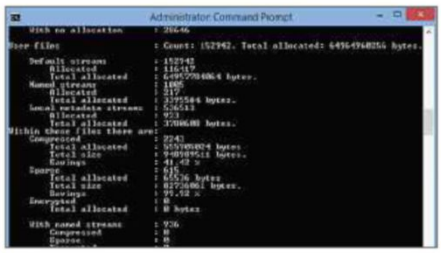
WINDOWS 8

Find out what's taking up space on your hard drive

Windows 8 has a handy new tool that shows you what's using the space on your hard drive. You can use the new 'Fsutil' command line by opening a Command Prompt with administrative rights: right-click the Start button and select Command Prompt (Admin), type `fsutil volume allocationreport X:`, where X represents the drive you want to scan. Windows will generate a report of drive usage.

The report may take some time, so it's a good idea to create a text file of it so you can keep a copy. To do this, type `fsutil volume allocationreport X: >somefolder\allocation.txt`, where 'somefolder' is a complete filepath of your choice (including the drive).

Ashley Cooper, via email



The 'Fsutil' command prompt shows you what's using the space on your hard drive

Readers' Helpdesk

Our pick of the best solutions posted on our reader forums. Visit forum.webuser.co.uk – it's friendly and free!

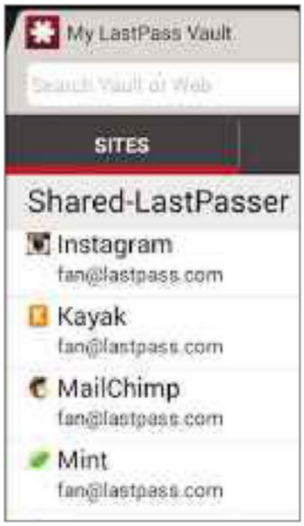
APPS

What's the best Android password manager?

Q I just bought an Android tablet and I'm looking for a good free password manager to use on it. Can anyone recommend one please?

sjw, Web User Forums

A I'm not sure if there is such a thing as a good free password manager for Android. However, I can thoroughly recommend LastPass Premium (lastpass.com) which, at only $12 (around £8) per year, is about as close as you'll get. LastPass is widely regarded as one of the best password managers and its Premium version lets you sync passwords across as many PCs, smartphones and tablets as you like. There's a free 14-day trial so you can find out whether you like the service before paying the subscription fee.



LastPass Premium lets you securely access passwords on an Android device

TheTechGuy, Web User Forums

GENERAL PC

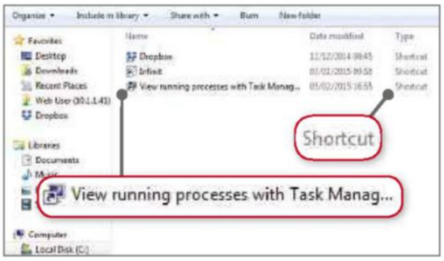
Why is my PC struggling to load programs?

Q When I switch on my Windows 7 PC, programs are sometimes very sluggish and jerky when they load. A restart usually solves the problem, but sometimes it takes two restarts. The PC is less than two years old, my hard drive is only about 25-per-cent full and I have 4GB of memory, so there shouldn't be a problem. Does anyone know what could be causing this?

aphrodite, Web User Forums

A It could be your anti-virus software or another resource-hungry program that's swamping your PC's processor. Have you checked how many start-up processes you have? You could try putting a shortcut to the Task Manager in the Startup folder so that you can see what's running and check whether there is an unreasonable load on the processor when your PC boots.

Also, is the hard drive making a lot of noise? You could check the drive for errors and defrag it if the files are fragmented.



Drag Task Manager from the Start menu to your Startup folder

izzit, Web User Forums

GENERAL PC

Why do I have formatting problems when copying text?

Q I frequently receive documents saved as PDF files, but when I try to copy the content into Microsoft Word, it appears in a strange format with only one word on each line. I have tried pasting it as unformatted text, but the result is always the same. Is there a way to correct this?

Castman, Web User Forums

A If you want to copy the entire document, it's best to convert it to a Word file rather than copy and paste. Use a converter such as PDF to Word Converter (www.pdftoword.com) or the free Desktop software PDFMate PDF Converter Free (bit.ly/pdfmate365). Copying the text using a PDF editor instead of a PDF viewer might also do the trick, but if you're still having problems, there are some good suggestions at bit.ly/pdf365.

'PDF to Word Converter' lets you upload a PDF and download a Word document

Joe_London, Madeline and Moonshine, Web User Forums

HARDWARE

Should I upgrade my old PC's graphics card?

Q I use a relatively old PC for everyday tasks and some retro gaming. It has an Intel Core 2 Duo processor, 4GB of memory, an Nvidia Quadro FX 1500 graphics card and runs the 32-bit version of Windows 7. I was wondering if I would get any benefit from installing an ATi Radeon 9600XT 128M graphics card that I was recently given? Is it superior to my installed one?

uncle_nuh, Web User Forums

A The card you've been given probably would perform slightly better than the one you currently have, but you'll have to check that it's compatible with the ports on your motherboard. There are three different types of graphics card: PCI, PCI Express and AGP. Also, make sure that your PC's power-supply unit is powerful enough to run the graphics card and won't need extra power connectors.

If you install the new graphics card, you will also need to have the correct drivers, so make sure these are available for Windows 7. Having said all that, if your current card seems capable of handling the tasks you are performing, I personally wouldn't bother upgrading.

BobClayton and Stewart40, Web User Forums

SOFTWARE

How do I save images in Gimp?

Q I experimented with editing some pictures in Gimp (www.gimp.org), but when I tried to open the files in Windows Photo Viewer, I was told they couldn't be opened. How can I fix this, please?

AuraTodd, Web User Forums

A Gimp uses its own file format (XCF) by default, so you'll need to export the files as JPEGs or another universal format if you want to open them in Window Photo Viewer. To do this, click File, Export As and choose the file type you want to export the image as. For more information on how to use GIMP, take a look at its user manual at bit.ly/gimp365.

izzit, Web User Forums

A full user manual for GIMP is available online at bit.ly/gimp365

SOFTWARE

What's the best screen-recording software?

Q Can anyone recommend a good screen-capture program I can use to record my PC's screen?

isdavidickeright, Web User Forums

A You could try Ezvid (www.ezvid.com), which is free and very simple to use. Otherwise, have a look at SRecorder (srecorder.com). I haven't used it myself but it looks as if it does what you want and the FAQ page answers a lot of questions you might have. It's also free and it records sound as well as video, with a single click of the mouse. Another option is IceCream Screen Recorder (bit.ly/icecream365), which was featured in a Workshop in *Web User* issue 352 (bit.ly/webuser352).

There probably isn't much to separate these free programs from one another, although IceCream Screen Recorder has some neat features that let you hide the cursor and Desktop icons while recording, and it can be operated using keyboard shortcuts.

succulent95, Madeline and Stewart40, Web User Forums

EMAILS

Can I filter spam in Thunderbird?

Q I have just installed Thunderbird as my default email program on a new Windows 8.1 laptop. I use Outlook on my other PC, which transfers junk mail to a separate folder. Can I set up Thunderbird to do the same?

aphrodite, Web User Forums

A Yes you can. In fact, Thunderbird has a built-in junk filter that learns which emails are legitimate and which are junk based on what you do with emails as they arrive. When you mark an email as junk, it will be sent to the junk folder and eventually the software should start to send similar messages there automatically. For more information, visit bit.ly/junk365.

difarn, Web User Forums

GENERAL PC

Can I stream music to my Bluetooth speaker?

Q I have just bought a Bluetooth-enabled soundbar for my TV. Its sound reproduction is better than my existing stereo, so I would like to try streaming music to it from my PC. I've had no problems pairing the devices but I can't see how to direct the sound from my PC through the speaker. Can it be done?

hillbilly, Web User Forums

A Right-click the speaker symbol in the notification area of your taskbar and select 'Playback devices'. The soundbar should appear as an option in the list. Select it instead of your PC's speakers and set it as the default option.

Choose your PC's sound output option in 'Playback devices'

difarn, Web User Forums

EMAIL

Why won't Outlook let me attach files?

Q I'm having problems with Outlook 2013, which I'm running on my Windows 8.1 PC. Although I can open the program, receive email from three accounts and send mail, it crashes whenever I try to insert attachments. I have tried waiting for it to respond but it never does. I have even tried restarting my PC but it still won't work. The only way I can get attachments to send is by right-clicking the file in Windows and selecting 'Mail to'. While this works, it's not at all practical. Can anyone suggest what I might do to fix it? I've already installed all available updates.

You can start Outlook in Safe Mode to disable add-ons

dave1510, Web User Forums

A Try starting Outlook in Safe Mode to disable any add-ons that may be causing the problem. To do this, press the Ctrl key while starting Outlook or press Windows+R and type `outlook /safe` then press Enter. While in Safe Mode, compose a new message and add an attachment to see if the problem has disappeared. If all is well, that would suggest that an add-on is the culprit.

While still in Safe Mode, click File, Options, then Add-Ins. At the bottom of the window, click Manage, COM Add-Ins and then click the Go button. Make a note of all your enabled add-ons, disable all of them and re-open Outlook. If the problem has disappeared, you need to enable one add-on at a time until you discover which one was causing the problem. You might need to restart Outlook after enabling each one.

You could also try temporarily disabling any security or anti-virus software that could be scanning your attachment and causing Outlook to freeze.

Moonshine and TheTechGuy, Web User Forums

Inbox

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Banning encryption violates human rights

What is David Cameron on about (Need to Know, Issue 363, bit.ly/webuser363) when he says that encryption should be banned so that security forces can read all our online messages? This would be a flagrant violation of our civil liberties, as well as rendering the web virtually unusable because of the security problems it would cause.

Using encrypted-messaging services, websites and apps is a fundamental human right as well as a sensible precaution to prevent your personal communication and information from being accessed by hackers. If David Cameron deprives us of this right, then cybercriminals will have a field day because we won't have a safe and reliable means of

stopping our sensitive data falling into the wrong hands. Using encryption tools doesn't necessarily mean that we have something to hide, as Mr Cameron seems to think, and we should have the right to choose whether we want to use them.

I can see it must be frustrating for the police when they can't read encrypted communication between suspected terrorists, but for the millions of people who aren't planning to blow things (and themselves) up or behead someone, banning it outright would be a moral travesty. We are lucky enough to live in a relatively democratic and free-thinking society, so why turn it in a paranoid, state-controlled one, like Iran or China? Cameron has already exerted his influence on the web by forcing ISPs to treat their users like children and introduce porn filters; he clearly has only a very basic understanding of the technology behind the internet.

Ban encryption and the people who use it to conceal criminal activities will soon find another medium, while the rest of us are left at risk from hackers.

Dominic Cooke, via email

Confirmation emails are a waste of paper

I was amused by and sympathetic with the Star Email from Bernard Feay in Issue 363, 'Emails almost gave away my Christmas surprise'. I had the same experience before Christmas when ordering presents online.

I wanted to keep the confirmation emails for the gifts I ordered, to have a record of order numbers and tracking numbers in case of delivery mishaps, so I decided to print the messages, hide them from the intended recipient of the gifts and delete the original emails. Of the seven orders I'd placed, six of the confirmation emails required two A4 sheets of paper each to print. In every case, the second sheet only had about one or two lines of text: a total waste of paper. I suppose there must be a way to ensure this does not happen, but I am not aware of it.

Surely suppliers must know that a large number of their customers will print out their order details, so why not ensure that all the information fits on a single sheet of A4? Is this really too much to ask?

Brian Bicknell, via email

What's gone wrong with AVG Anti-Virus?

In your Group Test of anti-virus software in Issue 363, I was interested but unsurprised to see AVG Anti-Virus Free ranked second from bottom in all three anti-malware tests. True, it was competing mainly against paid-for security software, but there's no denying that AVG has really gone downhill.

A few years ago, if someone asked me to recommend a free anti-virus program, I had no hesitation in advising them to install AVG. But I've had to get rid of it from my PC because it was so slow, kept displaying annoying pop-ups and, worst of all, failed to stop a particularly nasty threat getting onto my system, which took a long time and a lot of manual fiddling about to get rid of.

In my opinion, AVG is spreading itself too thinly these days, what with all its phone apps and non-security software, and is failing to focus on what used to be its 'bread and butter': protecting PCs from malware. I know that you can't expect the same level of performance from a free program that you get from paid-for software, but Avast is also free and that did pretty well in your tests, beating McAfee and Bitdefender. I'd be very reluctant to upgrade to one of AVG's commercial products for £30 or more if it can't even get the free one right.

James Nixon, Gloucester

A free family tree won't grow very far

In your comparison of free genealogy software in Issue 364 (bit.ly/webuser364), the Gold-rated service MyHeritage has a serious drawback. If you use it without a subscription, you are limited to entering 250 people in your family tree. A Premium subscription (£43.20 per year) allows 2,500 people; and a Premium Plus account (£76.32 per year) lets you enter an unlimited number. If you spend a lot of time with genealogy, you'll need the Premium Plus account because as soon as you exceed the 250 people your site is locked and you can't do a thing with it -

You can let us know your views and opinions via: webuser@dennis.co.uk, www.facebook.com/webusermagazine, www.twitter.com/webusermagazine and forum.webuser.co.uk

not even delete it. Yes, you get access to a lot of information, but nothing you can't get free or cheaper elsewhere.

For less than the cost of a MyHeritage subscription, you can get a full copy of RootsMagic (www.rootsmagic.co.uk), which still lets you access any MyHeritage service you belong to.

John Chapman, Web User Forums

Android is as deceptive as Apple about storage

I'm no Apple fanboy, but I couldn't help thinking that the complaints Barry Collins makes about the company's storage in Issue 363 ('Apple is too tight-fisted with storage') can also be made against many Android devices. This includes Google's own Nexus 6 phone, which promises 32GB of storage in its £499 model, but actually gives you around 26GB and has no SD card slot to expand its memory. Samsung phones also have all sorts of space-hogging rubbish on them that can't be removed. Apple may be the one that grabs all the headlines for this practice, but it's not the only offender.

Ewan Sykes, via email

Windows 10 still lacks a 'killer feature'

Although I enjoyed your feature about Windows 10 in Issue 364, I'm still finding it hard to get excited about the new operating system. It does just seem to be a blend of Windows 7 and 8, with no real 'killer feature' to suggest that Microsoft is leading the way in innovation. So the Start menu is back – well, wow! It shouldn't have been removed in the first place. And you'll be able to control your PC with your voice using Cortana – a feature I bet very few people will use, unless they want to annoy the rest of the office. Maybe Microsoft still has a few tricks up its sleeve before the final version is released, but until then, you can colour me unimpressed.

Max Donnelly, via email

What you say...

DO YOU APPROVE OF FACEBOOK'S MESSAGE REMINDING YOU TO REGISTER TO VOTE (bit.ly/vote365)?

I think it is a good idea. I am of the opinion that it should be compulsory for everyone to vote. We are in this together.

Ian Phipps

No, I find it irritating.

Lorraine Thorpe

Yes. I'm glad people are being encouraged to register. To have this on a social-media site that so many people use, so frequently, is sure to raise the numbers of registered voters.

Claire Jackson-Prior

I don't think you can really complain about how things are if you don't even bother to vote. So yes, I think it's a good thing.

Joanne Evans

DO YOU USE KASPERSKY, THE WINNER OF OUR ANTI-VIRUS GROUP TEST IN ISSUE 363 OF *WEB USER*?

Yes, Kaspersky Total Security. I've been using it for about 10 years and never had a problem.

Dave Meredith

Just installed Avast. It came third in your test, plus it's free, so let's see.

Darren Phillips

I switched from AVG to Avast a year ago and it has been really good so far. It scans emails and updates automatically.

Rob Goldring

I've been using Bitdefender for several years now and don't have any plans to swap. It does everything I want it to do and I've never had any problems with it.

Kevin Rivers

I use AVG, but it hasn't been fully reliable. My laptop was hit with a virus a while back and it caused me a nightmare.

Emmy UpTo-NoGood

WOULD YOU FEEL SAFE SENDING MONEY BY GMAIL (bit.ly/gmail365)?

Google is the biggest tech company in the world, so why wouldn't it be safe and secure?

Stuart A Hordern

Not sure I would feel safe using Gmail for this, considering Google monitors everything you do if you're not tech-savvy enough to protect yourself. I'll pass, thanks, and stick to the ever-so-slightly more secure PayPal.

Jason 'Boz' Bowyer

Never. Bitcoin is safest.

Jack Gold

If people choose to send me money instead of sending me Western Union spam emails, I won't complain.

Jamie Hadaway

ARE YOU HAPPY THAT BT HAS FINALISED ITS DEAL TO BUY EE?

Yes, if the service gets better. BT needs to provide better customer services, faster and unlimited data on pay-as-you-go contracts and a stronger signal.

David Robinson

No I'm not. I plan to leave EE broadband as soon as possible because BT is complete rubbish

Andrew Clennell

I have BT Broadband and EE mobile at the minute and have no complaints with either.

John Mason

Page 404

Barry Collins finds that ad blockers aren't as altruistic as they first appear

The hypocrisy of blocking online ads

Until about a year ago, I never liked the idea of ad blockers. The fairies don't put words on websites while you're sleeping; most of them are put there by real journalists being paid real money by real publishers, and if you need to view a banner ad or even close a pop-up in lieu of payment for the information you're getting, so be it. That's your side of the unwritten deal.

Then advertisers got silly. Really silly. Auto-playing video ads with the volume cranked to 11 became the norm. You'd be sitting at your desk when suddenly a tab you hadn't touched for two minutes would erupt into life, blasting your eardrums with advertising jingles as you flapped about in a panic, trying to find the offending tab to shut it down. You couldn't boycott the sites that were doing it, because they were *all* doing it: the only way to keep the peace was to (reluctantly, in my case) install an ad blocker.

> "Suddenly a tab you hadn't touched for two minutes would erupt into life, blasting your eardrums with advertising jingles"

The king of the blockers is undoubtedly Adblock Plus (adblockplus.org) – a no-fuss browser add-on that's so effective it claims to have 50 million active users. In fact, it's so good at blocking the really irritating stuff that you probably haven't even noticed some of the adverts that do slip through: those ads at the top of your search results and the mysteriously personalised ads down the side.

Click the Adblock Plus icon in your browser, delve into the settings and you'll note one of the pre-ticked options is to "allow some non-intrusive advertising". That option, the little Read More link next to it explains, "allows some of the advertising not considered annoying to be viewed. By doing this you support websites that rely on advertising but choose to do it in a non-intrusive way".

What Adblock Plus omits to tell you, however, is that it also benefits Adblock Plus. In a good piece of journalism, albeit one that's now behind a paywall (meaning it's not plagued by ads), the *Financial Times* discovered that companies such as Google, Microsoft and Amazon are paying Adblock Plus's developers substantial sums of money to wave their ads through (bit.ly/ft365). Adblock Plus isn't so much protection from ads as a protection racket, only allowing ads from big companies if they come to an undisclosed financial agreement.

True, those ads still have to meet strict criteria to pass through the filters – auto-running videos are still barred, no matter how big your cheque book – but Adblock Plus's system isn't truly designed to give companies an "incentive to produce better ads", as its FAQ claims. In fact, it's designed to give advertisers an incentive to pay Adblock Plus, and we web users are the unwitting incentive.

Adblock Plus's developer, Eyeo, claims it needs to charge the big firms because it "requires significant effort on our side and this task cannot be completely taken over by volunteers". Given that the company employs 36 staff and is currently hiring, it seems that taking the moral high ground is a pretty lucrative business.

I didn't like ad blockers before I installed them, but I like them a whole lot less now.

Illustration: Andrew Torrens

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